

# Community UPDATE



Bexley City Schools / Winter 2024



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## Dear Bexley Community:

As many of you may know, we officially adopted and launched our district's new strategic plan to Champion Our Future, along with a new mission, vision, and values. None of this would have been possible without the time, dedication, and honesty of our community, staff, students, and families who weighed in throughout the process.

The Bexley community is our greatest asset and strength. As Superintendent, I have learned from many in our community who have shared their thoughts, perspectives, and experiences. Additionally, students and staff have dozens of opportunities because of our partnership with the Bexley Education Foundation, booster and parent organizations, and community partners.

We have been able to forge pathways forward through our common goal of providing the absolute best education to our children. Bexley Schools is committed to continuing the work to create a Bexley that is welcoming and provides a sense of belonging for all community members and visitors through the One Bexley initiative with the city and the library and will keep sharing timely updates on those opportunities and events through our weekly newsletter.

This year, we have jumped right into Learn with Curiosity. Demonstrate Kindness. And Embrace Equity. While we recognize we will always have a drive to grow and improve, we are confident that with these core concepts in mind, together, we will champion our students and their success.

**Go Lions!**

Dr. Jason Fine



# BEXLEY DNA

## Learn with Curiosity

### High School Lions Learn Practical Lessons with Curiosity

In Bexley High School's personal finance class, students gain more than financial acumen; they learn essential life skills. Guided by Marybeth Motasem, the course recently included a hands-on session with Bexley Automotive professionals, teaching students practical auto maintenance skills like checking oil and tire pressure. The curriculum covers everything from budgeting to major life purchases and tools like investments, insurance and credit in order to equip students with the knowledge to navigate the financial aspects of adult life confidently.



## Demonstrate Kindness

### Kindness Week Takes Action in Bexley Schools

During World Kindness Week, students took heartfelt actions to demonstrate kindness. Particularly powerful in the district's elementary schools, classrooms became focused hubs of empathy and understanding. Through engaging activities like reading "Something in Common" and creating message chains, students learned the profound impact of kindness on their school culture. Most importantly, students learned that we all have the ability to make a positive impact through our individual actions each day.



## Embrace Equity

### Middle School Students Embrace Equity with Special Guests at Rosa Parks Assembly

Congresswoman Joyce Beatty and representatives from Ohio State and the Central Ohio Transit Authority visited Bexley Middle School for a special event. They presented a documentary about Rosa Parks, captivating students with her story and legacy. This experience helped students link history to the present, understand the importance of learning about our nation's past, and draw inspiration from Parks' resolve to improve the world for future generations.



## WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Check out our Quality Profile, which takes a deeper dive into what Bexley Schools offer!





## Bexley Schools and Classrooms

This year, Bexley City Schools will begin to develop a community-led master facilities plan in partnership with Perkins&Will and Moody Nolan, two widely respected architects specializing in efficient and engaging educational spaces. By early 2025, the district aims to have a planning document with recommendations for facility improvements to each of the district's five schools.

Bexley Schools is launching right away with a two-pronged approach. The district will begin a detailed physical and educational assessment process led by experts. Simultaneously, the district will be hosting a series of events to engage the community and gather feedback. All residents and staff are invited to participate and join the conversation to champion the future of education in our facilities.

### You're Needed on Facilities Planning

**January 23, 2024 — 9:00-10:30 am**  
Bexley Public Library

**January 23, 2024 — 7:00-8:30 pm**  
Cassingham Elementary

**March 12, 2024 — 9:00-10:30 am**  
Bexley Public Library

**March 12, 2024 — 7:00-8:30 pm**  
Montrose Elementary

**April 9, 2024 — 7:00-8:30 pm**  
Maryland Elementary

**April 10, 2024 — 9:00-10:30 am**  
Bexley Public Library

**May 21, 2024 — 7:00-8:30 pm**  
Bexley Public Library

**May 22, 2024 — 9:00-10:30 am**  
Bexley Public Library



  
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#### [BexleySchools.org/FacilitiesPlanning](https://BexleySchools.org/FacilitiesPlanning)

In the coming weeks and months, the district will share other participation and feedback opportunities. We don't want you to miss our online surveys, virtual feedback meetings, and open feedback forms to submit your thoughts and opinions.

### Why Now?

The average age of Bexley's school buildings is 84 years, with some facilities at or near 100 years old. Maintenance is always a priority and it's becoming increasingly expensive to keep our buildings operating well. We also face the reality that some spaces no longer meet the needs of today's students or standards.

**LEARN MORE**





# Financial Update with Kyle Smith

## Finance Advisory Council

Our district's financial health is managed through the Treasurer's office, and oversight is provided by the Board of Education and the Finance Advisory Council, made up of individuals who have aptitude in finance, business, communication, or law.

## Financial Outlook

The district's last operating levy in 2019, along with the emergency federal relief dollars and strong performance of income tax receipts, has enabled the district to have a strong fiscal outlook for the last five years. However, with the rising cost of education, the district's expenses are projected to outpace revenue in the 2023-2024 school year.

## Revenue Sources

Approximately 84% of our district's budget is funded through local property and income taxes. The district is on the state guarantee, meaning no additional funding is expected.

### • Income Tax Receipts

Our May 2023 forecast accurately predicted a drop and return to normal income tax receipts in July. A further decline in FY24 is forecasted because of additional decreases in receipts in October.

### • Property Tax Valuation

New valuations are out from the Franklin County Auditor. House Bill 920 ensures that higher property values don't automatically mean higher taxes. In fact, as valuations increase, the voted tax rate decreases. Only the original total dollar amount of a levy approved by voters can be collected.

## Expenditures

Wages and benefits are the district's largest costs and increase annually due to negotiated agreements and the rising cost of health insurance. This is a substantial reason why expenses are projected to exceed revenue beginning in 2023-2024, as seen in the chart below.

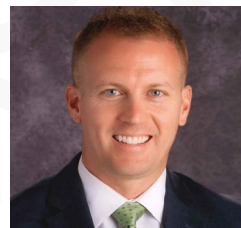
## Upcoming Meetings

The most recent five-year financial forecast update was presented at the Board meeting on November 15. Subsequent discussions about the district's financial stability and additional resources or cost-saving measures will also be held at the board level.

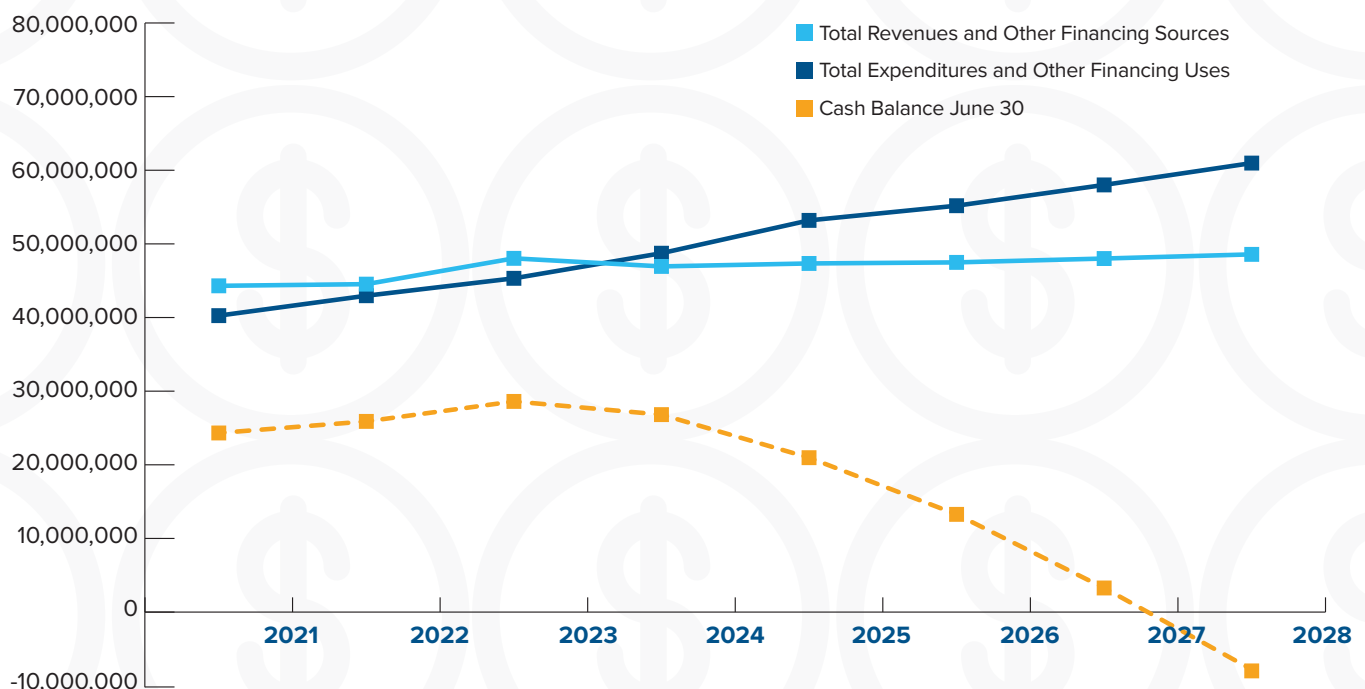
In closing, we are committed to maintaining the high standard of education that our community expects while also being prudent stewards of taxpayer dollars. We are committed to transparent communication and welcome your input as we navigate these financial challenges together.

**Sincerely,**

Kyle Smith, Treasurer



## Forecast Shows Expenses Outpace Revenue in 2024







## Experts & Experiences Enhance Bexley Learning



**1. Heart Health and Literacy:** Bexley fourth graders learned from Dr. Brent Lampert, a cardiologist, after reading "The Circulatory Story" as part of the Wit and Wisdom curriculum. He said, "I've read the book. You know more about the heart than I did when I started medical school!"

**2. Hero Journeys Uncovered:** Bexley Middle School's 6th grade students learned directly from award-winning author Grace Ellis about the Hero's Journey archetype and writing process. A group of students also enjoyed a workshop at the Bexley Public Library with the author to learn about crafting stories of their own.

**3. Author Sparks Curiosity:** Torrey Maldonado, author and middle school teacher, visited fifth graders, igniting imaginations with tales from his books and life experiences. His engaging discussion about his novel "What Lane?" focused on friendships.

**4. Jazz Masterclass at Bexley:** Renowned jazz musician Benny Benack III shared his expertise with Bexley High School jazz band students, enhancing their performance of "Mood Indigo" and offering personal advice for their craft. This special session, organized by the Columbus Jazz Orchestra, highlighted the depth and richness of jazz music.

**5. Community Cheers Students:** Montrose Elementary's first-quarter assembly became a community celebration with Capital University football players, city officials, and even a student's grandmother leading musical performances. Students were recognized for kindness and safety and the event showcased the community's support for our schools.

**6. Foster Love of Reading:** Children's author Sarah Aronson captivated Maryland Elementary's second and third graders with her book "Brand-New Bubbe." She encouraged students to lean on their teachers to help them find a love of diverse stories and the magic

of finding the perfect book, saying, "These teachers will use their magic wands [pencils] to find a book that you love. All you have to do is ask!"

**7 Veggie Challenge Success:** Bexley High's Healthy Cuisine class students encouraged younger peers to embrace vegetables with a creative 'veggie challenge.' This initiative included meal kits, family collaboration and engaging recipe videos, aiming to transform picky eaters into veggie lovers.

**8. Leadership and Learning:** Bexley High students immersed themselves in Ohio State's Leadership Collaborative, honing skills to become change-makers in their school. This enriching experience, filled with debates and discussions, marks a significant step in their journey as young leaders.



BEXLEY CITY SCHOOLS  
**STRATEGIC  
PLAN 2023**  
CHAMPIONING OUR FUTURE



CULTURE



TEACHING &  
LEARNING



FACILITIES



SCAN  
TO WATCH



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