

EAGLE MESSENGER

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF LIBERTY-BENTON LOCAL SCHOOLS | SPRING 2023 NEWSLETTER

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

PLANNING FOR NEXT YEAR, STATE TESTING, AND MORE



The 2023-2024 school year may seem far off, but planning is well underway already! Screening for our 2023 kindergarten class took place March 17 at Gateway, and as you can imagine, there are a lot of logistics to plan in preparation for opening our new PK-8 building. Our administrative team is busy mapping out every last detail, and we can't wait to celebrate this new facility with our staff, students and community.

Now, back to this year. State testing is just around the corner. As a reminder, test scores are only one aspect of a student's education, and we are pleased with our students' academic progress this year. In fact, several of our students recently enjoyed a day of fun to celebrate another successful quarter. Additionally, we continue to seek ways to provide engaging learning opportunities. One way we do this is through Fly Like an Eagle Day where students can go to any class they desire all day long.

Speaking of progress, academics is just one piece of the pie when it comes to the overall Liberty-Benton experience. You will read more throughout this newsletter about student achievements in athletics and the arts, such as the many league championships our student-athletes have won this year; and several of our band and choir students have attained high ratings in district competitions. Also, our performing arts students performed "Little Shop of Horrors" to a packed audience February 24th and 25th.

Also, be sure to check out our upcoming calendar of events and other fun L-B facts. Spring has sprung, and we're excited to end this year on a high note. Go Eagles!

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Kowalski".

Mark Kowalski, Superintendent



PHOTO CREDIT: NICE GUY STUDIO

IMPORTANT DATES

MARCH 31, 2023
END OF THE THIRD
NINE WEEKS

APRIL 7-10, 2023
SPRING BREAK

JUNE 1, 2023
LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

JUNE 4, 2023
GRADUATION 2:00 PM
HIGH SCHOOL GYM

*All dates are subject to change.
Please visit our website for updates.



Our wrestlers hit the mat for a Blanchard Valley Conference (BVC) championship title, and Gavin Gillig was the district champion at 215 pounds, advancing him to state.



At the middle school level, the football team finished the season with six wins and one loss and our seventh graders had the opportunity to gain valuable experience by competing in several games to prepare them for their eighth grade season.



CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR STUDENT ATHLETES!



The volleyball teams had a fantastic season. Both seventh and eighth grades ended with matching 15-4 records and the seventh grade team won the BVC championship.



The cross country teams continued to improve, with the boys finishing first at the BVC Invitational and the girls third.

The girls' basketball teams showcased their skill with a 5-1 record for the seventh grade team and a 6-2 record in the BVC for the eighth grade team. The boys had a solid season on the court as well. The seventh graders finished as BVC runner-ups with a tough overtime loss in the championship game and the eighth grade team was named league champs. The wrestling team placed fourth in the BVC tournament.



DID YOU KNOW FACTS

1

DID YOU KNOW

Did you know the Liberty-Benton High School Class of 2023 has

3 students

entering the military? They attended the Ohio state military signing day in Columbus.

2

DID YOU KNOW

Did you know Liberty-Benton has not had any new operating dollars voted in since

2008?

3

DID YOU KNOW

Did you know the students in Grades K-4 have read a total of

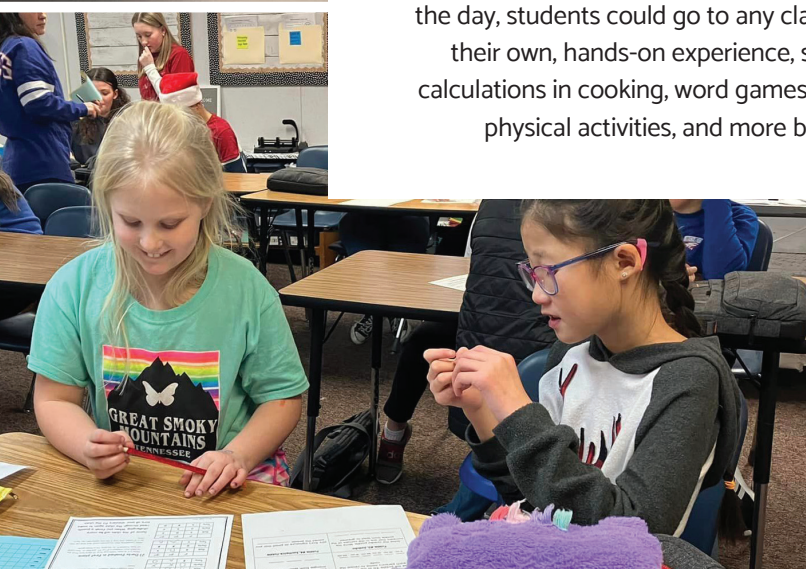
53,951,079

words (as of March 6th)?



FLY LIKE AN EAGLE

Liberty-Benton students recently had a chance to dive deeper into the subjects they value the most through Fly Like an Eagle Day. Throughout the day, students could go to any class they desired. Each teacher created their own, hands-on experience, such as science experiments, math calculations in cooking, word games, social studies trivia, real-life karaoke, physical activities, and more based on the subject they teach.



TREASURER'S UPDATE



Many residents may have received a larger tax bill this year due to the state ordered six-year reappraisal of real estate properties. The aim of this reappraisal by the Hancock County Auditor's Office was to catch up with current market values, resulting in an increase in the valuation of many properties.

Sales data from 2019, 2020 and 2021 were used to establish property values for the reappraisal. As many of you know, Ohio's residential property values have been on the rise over the past few years. According to the Zillow Home Value Index, typical home values increased by 14.61% from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, with a three year change of 35.24% or 11.75% annually from July 2019–June 2022.

The Ohio Department of Taxation also provides annual recommendations for counties undergoing a triennial update, with an average increase of 28% in residential property values recommended for 11 counties in 2022. Regardless of the method for calculation, what we know for sure is that property values increased at a double digit pace over the last three years.

The good news for taxpayers with respect to our schools is that thanks to House Bill 920, signed into law about 50 years ago, even when home values rise, the millage for the district is adjusted so the amount of money schools collect from taxpayers does not increase.

Property values also affect state per-pupil funding, however, with higher values tending to increase local share and lower values tending to decrease it. As the school district treasurer, I want to assure you that we are closely monitoring these changes and utilizing the district forecast to model different scenarios and plan accordingly.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to our office if you have any questions or concerns.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Dobbins".

Lisa Dobbins, Treasurer

PERFORMING ARTS STUDENTS RECEIVE HONORS

Nine choir students and one band student recently performed at the District 3 Honors Festival. Similarly, 23 choir students and six band students were chosen to perform at the All-County Honor Choir/Band Festival. Additionally, our Eagle singers received a Superior rating at the district competition and are moving on to the State Adjudicated event at the end of April. Not to be left out, our high school band received an overall rating of Good at the recent district-level event.

And, our theater students performed "Little Shop of Horrors" Feb. 24 and 25 at the Marathon Center for the Performing Arts. The musical was a huge success thanks to all of the hard work of the set designers, production team and actors, and we are so thankful for our community's support of our performing arts programs!





Liberty-Benton student-athletes' hard work is paying off this year! Last Fall, our girls' and boys' cross country teams were league champions, and the boys' team made it to the state qualifier. Similarly, the volleyball team attained league champion status and made it to the regional qualifier. Both the girls' and boys' soccer teams were also named league champs.



This Winter, our boys' bowling team bowled their way to the league championship, while our girls' bowling team was runner-up.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ATHLETICS?



The girls' and boys' basketball teams were also league champions, and our competitive cheer squad qualified for the state competition. They also recently took first place in the Large Varsity Game Day Division at a competition at Ashland University.

STUDENTS CELEBRATE ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL QUARTER

The eighth grade teaching team at Liberty-Benton gives their students a little extra encouragement to work hard throughout the school year. Students who achieve no Ds or Fs on their report card, have no missing assignments, no discipline referrals and no more than three late assignments get to take part in a special incentive at the end of each quarter.

Earlier this year, students enjoyed a trip to the bowling alley while most recently, they chose between watching a movie or playing board and card games before wrapping up the day with ice cream floats and a riveting game of dodgeball.



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