

The Tornado Connection

Krainbucher Repeats as Geography Bee Champion

By Maura Mormak

The National Geographic Bee is an academic competition organized yearly by the National Geographic Society as a way for teachers to include geography in their classroom learning, spark student interest, and increase public awareness about the subject.

The tradition of holding an annual Geography Bee at Butler Intermediate High School has been around for over 20 years, and according to Ms. Carlson, seventh grade history teacher and this year's coordinator for the IHS bee, "We participate in the Geography Bee to give our students a chance to show off their talents and potentially win scholarships if they continue on to the state and national levels. It also is a great way to encourage students to learn more about the world around them." The competition takes a spin on just memorizing locations, offering a fun, contest-based way to learn about geography.

The Geography Bee continues to succeed in getting seventh and eighth grade students in our district interested in geography. This year's first place winner, eighth grader David Krainbucher, said that participating in the Bee is very fun and can be a good opportunity for students. Ms. Carlson commented, "Students should participate in the Geography Bee because it is a great opportunity to learn more about geography in general. Geography covers so much information and is so important for people. It is also a way to potentially earn scholarship money, and the national grand prize winner even gets an all-inclusive trip to the Galapagos Islands."

In order for an interested student to participate, they must take a qualifying test. Participation is entirely voluntary, according to Mr. Cochran, the chair of the history and geography department. "In the past two years we have had student volunteers take the qualifying test as opposed to giving it to all students in eighth grade and those seventh graders in ESP," he said. When a student passes the test, they are

admitted into the bee and given studying resources.

Students participating in the Geography Bee can use resources such as the National Geographic webpage, any atlases, and a practice question packet. According to David, "I played around with some geography apps on my phone to help me study." Kahoots and practice quizzes are also available for studying, and eighth graders can use their geography textbooks if they are in the class.

The Geography Bee is known to make an impact on participating students. For example, students can gain confidence in themselves. It is also a great way for students to increase their knowledge of geography. "It can be stressful at first, but it paid off in the end!" said David. He added that his photographic memory and abundance of studying have led him to winning for the last two years, which has really increased his confidence.

Mr. Cochran highly recommends that students participate in the bee. "It's a fun way to show your knowledge and skills in a particular area," he said. Not only is the Geography Bee a fun competition, but students can also win big prizes. According to Mr. Cochran, "If you win the state/national bee, there are college scholarships available."

The Geography Bee has been a part of the school year at Butler Intermediate High for a long time, and is a fantastic way for students to participate in some friendly competition while learning about our world. Teachers like Mr. Cochran and Ms. Carlson expect the bee to continue for years to come, and students like David hope to be able to enjoy participating in the future.

Student Schedule for 2020-2021 School Year

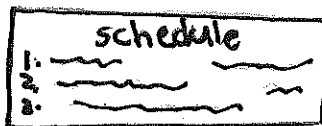
By Elijah Thorhauer and Abigail Lutz

Students began scheduling for the 2020-2021 school year in late February and will finish in mid-March.

On February 24 in homeroom, students received scheduling packets that included a purple scheduling open house flyer, a gold

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Keeping the lines of communication open



course selection guide booklet, a white scheduling information bulletin, and a single-page scheduling worksheet, which varied in color by grade level. Students were encouraged to take all of these materials home and discuss their scheduling options with parents during the two-week scheduling window. During that two-week time period, teachers in all academic classes gave students recommendations for next year in their subject. Guidance counselors also visited history classes during that time period.

On March 2, the Butler Intermediate High School is hosting a scheduling open house where students and parents can ask questions about next year's classes from 6 to 8 p.m. At the open house, principals, guidance counselors, and a teacher representative from each department will be available to answer any additional questions that parents and students may have.

The students' schedules will be finished and will be available in the first week of August through the Tyler app. The course offerings for 2020-2021 are the same as this school year, with the exception of a few elective changes.

Depending on the grade level of the student, additional classes are also available. For example, eighth grade students are required to take geography, art, family and consumer science, health and physical education, music, mechatronics, and STEM materials. Some students also have the opportunity to register for ESP (the Enrichment Studies Program) and first year world language classes. Plus, many take part in the optional full-year music programs by participating in band, orchestra, or chorus.

By ninth grade, students have several periods where they can choose elective courses as well. Students select from classes in art, music, family and consumer sciences, wood or metal manufacturing, communications, yearbook, and JROTC. According to Mr. Dobransky, "The ninth graders are able to choose their own elective courses because they are ready to take more responsibility."

In ninth grade, students also have the choice of an additional program, known as the

College Tech Prep Program. According to the course selection guide, "College Tech Prep is a special program of study that provides the technical preparation to allow a student to continue his or her education in an associate degree or baccalaureate degree program." Students enrolled in the program must choose a scope and sequence to follow, such as allied health technologies, business management, communications and media, engineering-related technologies, information technologies, or child development. With each of these strands, students are required to take a few electives toward completing their requirements each year. All students who are eligible for the Tech Prep Program attended an informational assembly on Wednesday, February 19 during activity period.

According to Mr. Dobransky, students should always keep their options open when scheduling. "Students should take challenging classes and be prepared to do things that they may not be interested in today because that interest may change," he said.

To add to that, Mrs. Porter, the guidance department secretary, advised, "Choose classes that interest you. Don't just select things because your friends are in them."

The scheduling forms for the 2020-2021 school year are due on March 5 in history class. At that time, all scheduling worksheets should be completed and signed by teachers and parents. The students will enter their class selections online with the help of guidance counselors and teachers that week. If you have any additional questions regarding the scheduling process, please contact the guidance office at 724-214-3400.

Semi-Formal Dance Planned for March

By Alexis Frye and Kaitlynn Plopi

On Thursday, March 26, the student council will host a spring semi-formal dance in the IHS gym from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Only seventh, eighth, and ninth grade Butler students will be permitted to attend. Tickets will be sold the week of March 16-20 for \$5 each during

lunch. Students must have a signed parent permission slip to purchase a ticket; the forms will be distributed in homeroom the week before tickets go on sale.

On the night of the dance, students should wear semi-formal attire. No jeans or t-shirts will be permitted. Females should wear a dress, or skirt with a dressy shirt. Males should wear dress pants and a dress shirt. Although this is a dressy dance, it is still only a semi-formal, so tuxedos and prom dresses are discouraged. All of the same rules of the Butler Area School District dress code will be applied, including the straps and skirt length rule.

Refreshments, including cookies, chips, pretzels, water, and soda will be sold in Cafeteria B. Students will have to bring extra money to buy refreshments and are not able to use their lunch account. Water and soda will be 50 cents. If students have had in-school or out-of-school suspension during the week prior to the dance, they will not be permitted to attend.

According to Mrs. Sankey, this year's dance theme will be Hollywood, and Mr. Krack will again serve as DJ. "He has a wide variety of music and he takes requests, but a lot of the time it's pop or retro music that's played," said Mrs. Sankey. Mr. Krack, a ninth grade math teacher, would prefer to have requests the night before the dance, so that he can have them ready to go. In addition to Mrs. Sankey and Mr. Krack, other teachers will chaperone the event.

Approximately 250-500 attend the yearly school dance each year. The students in student council will have to set up decorations in the gym and hallways the afternoon before the dance. They will set up refreshments in Cafeteria B and a photo area in the gym. It typically costs the student council \$500 to hold the dance, and the rest of the money earned by selling refreshments and tickets goes to a charity chosen by the student council.

According to Mrs. Sankey, Butler has held a semi-formal for junior high students for roughly 22 years. Normally, the dance is held in the winter, but they moved the date to March this year to work around sports games and practices. "We have had to cancel due to weather or have had conflicts with gym availability, so

hopefully this will work better," said Mrs. Sankey.

New Permanent Substitutes Hired

By McKenna O'Brien and Jaysa Meehan

In the 2019-2020 school year, Butler Area School District added permanent substitute positions, and two of these positions are at the Intermediate High School, filled by Mr. Butler and Mr. Lane.

This new position involves reporting to school every day and filling in for teachers that may need coverage or providing extra support on days when all of the slots are already filled. Mr. Butler and Mr. Lane both come into school earlier than normal teachers, so that they can be ready for the students in the classroom where they will teach that day. Part of the job description involves a lot of flexibility, and sometimes the two teachers have several different jobs to do in a day. They will be filling in for all types of classes, but they do not cover for any in-school or out-of-school clubs or activities.

Ms. Browne, one of the secretaries in the principal's office, organizes the substitutes and needed coverages for the building. She assists the two teachers with keys, directions, and sometimes prints plans. If a teacher's instructions are confusing, they rely on the other teachers or ask students what they did the day before and teach to their ability. "Mr. Lane and Mr. Butler have been a great help here. They have been a blessing," Ms. Browne said.

According to Mr. Butler, "My favorite class to teach is social studies, and I enjoy having the opportunity to teach all different types of students each day." Mr. Lane agreed. "My favorite part is I get to teach all types of classes," he said.

Although both men like the new challenges that each day brings, they hope to be teaching full-time in their certified areas in the near future. In ten years, Mr. Butler sees himself in a full-time social studies teaching position, and Mr. Lane hopefully sees himself teaching full-time in physical education.

Mr. Lane received a degree in Health and P.E. at Slippery Rock University, while

Mr. Butler earned a degree in Education, with a certification in social studies. According to Mr. Butler, "I have worked in smaller schools before this position, and the nice thing about a bigger school like Butler is that it has more programs for the students, like Latin for example." Mr. Lane has only worked in the Butler Area School District and commented, "I love Butler, and this is where I want to stay."

Seventh Graders Continue Gettysburg Tradition

By Danielle Foringer

On March 14-15, 285 students in seventh grade will attend the annual Gettysburg field trip, a tradition that has continued for over 50 years in Butler. The enthusiasm doesn't seem to be dwindling, however. According to Mrs. Casher, one of the coordinators of the trip, "This year's group is the largest since 2014."

Because of the number of students attending, careful planning is needed to avoid overloading one location. This means that some groups will start their tour at the capitol building, while others go to the museums. "All of the buses have their own tour guides, and the schedule is carefully timed because our group is so large," commented Mrs. Heinack, an eighth grade math teacher who has chaperoned the field trip for many years.

On the first day, all students will tour the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building to find out what makes politics so exciting. During the tour, they will sit in the House and Senate chambers and walk through the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. According to the brochure provided to students by Logan Tours, Inc, the company coordinating the trip, "The beauty and art in this majestic building serve as the backdrop for a lesson in Pennsylvania history and state government."

The students also visit the Civil War Museum, where they will watch a group of reenactors passionate about the Civil War and educating. The museum offers a variety of hands-on activities so that the travelers can get a better picture of life during the war. Areas students can explore include: musket firing,

marching in formation, period dance, and treatment of wounded soldiers.

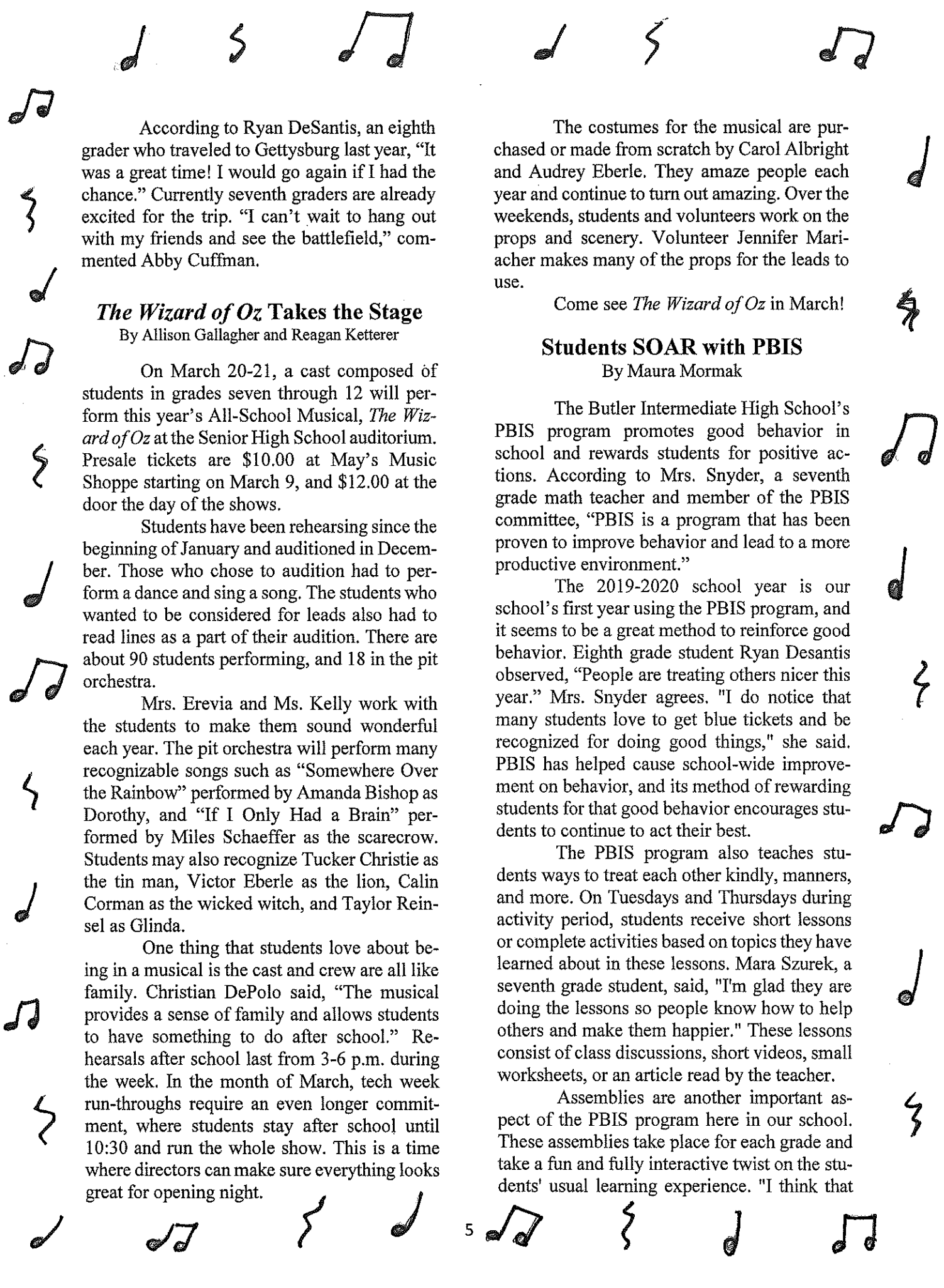
Also on the first day, students will go to Hershey's Chocolate World, where they learn how chocolate is made. After time to browse the gift shop for souvenirs to bring home to family and friends, they will head on to their next stop.

The first busy day ends at the Hanover YMCA. Students will have a pizza party and participate in activities such as swimming, basketball, volleyball, dodgeball, and more. On the night of May 14, the seventh graders and their chaperones will be staying at the Country Inn & Suites, Gettysburg, which features comfortable rooms equipped with cable TV and a blow dryer. In February, students requested roommates, and coordinators then assigned them into rooms of 3-5 students.

After a good night's sleep, all of the students will head to Gettysburg National Park. The Visitor's Center film gives a great introduction to the Civil War and the Battle of Gettysburg. The Cyclorama is an enormous, 360-degree "Battle of Gettysburg" painting-in-the-round measuring 377 feet around and 42 feet high. The group stands in the center of this three-dimensional diorama as the events of the three-day battle unfold in front of them, culminating with the fury of Pickett's Charge. After this dramatic re-telling, students explore the museum exhibits at their own pace.

After they explore the fun exhibits, students will have a licensed battlefield tour guide will board each bus as they embark on a two-hour tour of the town and battlefield of Gettysburg. History will come alive as the students get out and explore the infamous Peach Orchard, Devil's Den, and the site of Pickett's Charge. According to the trip brochure, "The guides are awesome with kids, bringing history to life with sensational stories and fun activities."

This educational and fun trip is \$290. Students had the chance to fundraise for their trip by selling Daffin's chocolate bars and hoagies earlier in the year, and some scholarships were available.

The page is decorated with various hand-drawn musical notes and symbols. At the top, there are several eighth and sixteenth notes, some with stems. On the left margin, there are more notes and a few squiggly lines. On the right margin, there are notes and a squiggly line. At the bottom, there are notes and a squiggly line. The page number '5' is located at the bottom center, between two notes.

According to Ryan DeSantis, an eighth grader who traveled to Gettysburg last year, "It was a great time! I would go again if I had the chance." Currently seventh graders are already excited for the trip. "I can't wait to hang out with my friends and see the battlefield," commented Abby Cuffman.

The Wizard of Oz Takes the Stage

By Allison Gallagher and Reagan Ketterer

On March 20-21, a cast composed of students in grades seven through 12 will perform this year's All-School Musical, *The Wizard of Oz* at the Senior High School auditorium. Presale tickets are \$10.00 at May's Music Shoppe starting on March 9, and \$12.00 at the door the day of the shows.

Students have been rehearsing since the beginning of January and auditioned in December. Those who chose to audition had to perform a dance and sing a song. The students who wanted to be considered for leads also had to read lines as a part of their audition. There are about 90 students performing, and 18 in the pit orchestra.

Mrs. Erevia and Ms. Kelly work with the students to make them sound wonderful each year. The pit orchestra will perform many recognizable songs such as "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" performed by Amanda Bishop as Dorothy, and "If I Only Had a Brain" performed by Miles Schaeffer as the scarecrow. Students may also recognize Tucker Christie as the tin man, Victor Eberle as the lion, Calin Corman as the wicked witch, and Taylor Reinsele as Glinda.

One thing that students love about being in a musical is the cast and crew are all like family. Christian DePolo said, "The musical provides a sense of family and allows students to have something to do after school." Rehearsals after school last from 3-6 p.m. during the week. In the month of March, tech week run-throughs require an even longer commitment, where students stay after school until 10:30 and run the whole show. This is a time where directors can make sure everything looks great for opening night.

The costumes for the musical are purchased or made from scratch by Carol Albright and Audrey Eberle. They amaze people each year and continue to turn out amazing. Over the weekends, students and volunteers work on the props and scenery. Volunteer Jennifer Mariacher makes many of the props for the leads to use.

Come see *The Wizard of Oz* in March!

Students SOAR with PBIS

By Maura Mormak

The Butler Intermediate High School's PBIS program promotes good behavior in school and rewards students for positive actions. According to Mrs. Snyder, a seventh grade math teacher and member of the PBIS committee, "PBIS is a program that has been proven to improve behavior and lead to a more productive environment."

The 2019-2020 school year is our school's first year using the PBIS program, and it seems to be a great method to reinforce good behavior. Eighth grade student Ryan Desantis observed, "People are treating others nicer this year." Mrs. Snyder agrees. "I do notice that many students love to get blue tickets and be recognized for doing good things," she said. PBIS has helped cause school-wide improvement on behavior, and its method of rewarding students for that good behavior encourages students to continue to act their best.

The PBIS program also teaches students ways to treat each other kindly, manners, and more. On Tuesdays and Thursdays during activity period, students receive short lessons or complete activities based on topics they have learned about in these lessons. Mara Szurek, a seventh grade student, said, "I'm glad they are doing the lessons so people know how to help others and make them happier." These lessons consist of class discussions, short videos, small worksheets, or an article read by the teacher.

Assemblies are another important aspect of the PBIS program here in our school. These assemblies take place for each grade and take a fun and fully interactive twist on the students' usual learning experience. "I think that

every event we do is important in some way," Mrs. Snyder said, "but the most important would probably be the assembly at the beginning of the year." During this first assembly, students learn about how the program works at the BIHS. According to Mrs. Snyder, "It is the first time we get to show students that we have high expectations for them and are excited to work with them on making our school a great place to be each day."

In the PBIS program, students get rewarded for kind actions and good behavior. They can receive small blue tickets or larger golden tickets. Blue tickets are given to students as recognition for small acts, such as picking up a pencil for a peer or volunteering in class. These tickets are distributed on a daily basis by teachers, and every week classrooms have a ticket drawing as an opportunity for students to win small prizes. Mara said, "The blue tickets are a really cool way for everyone to realize that it actually matters when they do something kind for someone else."

Golden tickets are a way for students to be recognized for major things, like stopping in the hallway to help someone pick up their books or brightening someone's day. Unlike the blue tickets, teachers do not have access to these tickets on a daily basis and have select days where they can give out a gold ticket. Every day, an announcement is made during activity period for all students who earned a gold ticket to come to the library. Once a grade earns a certain amount of these gold tickets, a bingo is earned. During this bingo, gold ticket winners have the chance to win a gift card. Gold tickets winners' names are also recognized on the morning announcements daily. These tickets are a great way to recognize students for their behavior, especially since this recognition can often get overlooked. Mrs. Snyder said, "We are seeing improvements in classroom behavior and are really focusing on rewarding good behaviors and choices, which is something that we often forget to do."

PBIS is a great program here at the BIHS. According to Mrs. Snyder, "It is meant to encourage students to have positive and helpful interactions with other students and

staff in individual classrooms, as well as in common areas such as hallways and the cafeteria." The program encourages students to do their best and be kind during the school day each and every day, and PBIS keeps the exceptional behavior in our school steady.

Social Media Impacts Students

By Rylee Colteryahn and Ava Hindman


Throughout the years, students and teachers at the Butler Intermediate High School have seen technology and social media grow and expand. Although students at the IHS are not permitted to use their phones during the school day, social media still has a very real impact on education.

Mrs. Crissman, the assistant principal, believes social media causes problems and drama throughout the school. According to Mrs. Crissman, just because a social media post or conversation happens outside of the school day doesn't mean that a student isn't worried about or preoccupied by it. "On apps such as TikTok, students participate in challenges that influence their decisions in life," she commented.

She went on to add that social media can spread negativity. "When communicating online, children don't think before they speak and they don't realize how it hurts other peers on the other side of the screen," she observed. "When students are behind a screen, they may say something that they wouldn't say if they were talking in person," she added.

Many of the teachers in the building see the impact of social media on their students as well as on their own children. They all agree that regulating the use of social media as a parent of young teenagers can be difficult.

Mrs. Bodamer and her seventh grade daughter Maggie agree that social media and technology is a way for teenagers to connect with their peers. Mrs. Bodamer commented, "Students know more about other students' lives today, even if they have never met in person." Adults view this as "talking to strangers," but teenagers look at it differently. Because of this, Mrs. Bodamer strongly believes that



students should be prepared for the responsibility of social media before they should be permitted access to it.

Mrs. Bodamer's daughter, Maggie, has four different social media accounts, and they are all private, which makes them safer than if they were public. The two of them have talked quite a bit about internet safety, and Mrs. Bodamer has made her expectations clear.

Mr. Popovich agrees with Mrs. Bodamer that responsibility is a big factor of social media. However, Mr. Popovich believes social media is "a hunting ground with millions of predators." As a father and a teacher, he is concerned. As a parent, he requires his children to have all private accounts because of all the drama he can see in and outside of the school. In addition, he relies on his oldest daughter to help him monitor the younger siblings. "It is a lot to keep up with," he said.

Another student at the Intermediate, Evie Paserba, doesn't post very often on a variety of different accounts, but when she does it is usually about the sports she plays. Overall, Evie believes social media can be beneficial because she can talk to other students even if she is not with them in person. "It is also entertaining," she said.

Mrs. Chwalik allows her children to have social media so they can communicate with friends. In her personal experience with her own children, she understands that social media can be safe if used properly. Along with the other teachers, she can see a difference in the school because of the bullying, and students knowing more about other students' lives. Because Mrs. Chwalik does not have her own social media accounts, she has her children log their accounts on her phone so that she can see their activity. "They know that my priority is their safety, so they don't complain," she said.

Lastly, Ariana Morrow has private accounts on three types of social media. Her parents monitor her accounts by having it themselves, following her, and having access to what she posts. For the past year or less of having social media, Ari thinks social media is beneficial if you use it correctly.

Overall, all of the students and teachers/parents agree: Social media is here to stay. If used properly, it can be a good communication tool. Parents can help to teach their children the appropriate uses of social media, and insist that all of their accounts are kept private.

Starfish Strives to Reduce Bullying

By Reagan Ketterer and Allison Gallagher

Butler Intermediate High School's anti-bullying program, Starfish, has been around for at least 20 years. Over the years, the program has positively impacted countless students and staff members and is expected to continue to do so for many years to come.

The name "Starfish" originates from a story about a young boy who was at the beach and noticed a lot of starfish that had washed up on the shore. He picked up one of them and threw it into the ocean. He kept throwing them into the ocean one after another. An old man asked him why he was throwing them back and told the boy that he couldn't possibly make a difference. As he tossed another starfish back into the waves, the young boy replied, "It makes a difference to this one." The story reminds the students and staff that kindness is a chain reaction, and sometimes helping one person has a huge impact.

Mr. Denny Barger, a retired teacher from Karns City, introduced the Starfish program to the teachers in Butler. When he told the story, the teachers thought it was a great thing to share with the students and the rest of the staff members. His story inspired many of them and some other staff members decided to join long time advisors such as Mrs. Neely Aldridge, Mrs. Minch, Mrs. Snyder, Mrs. Caton, Mrs. Chwalik, and Mrs. Reinhold. Every year since then, Mr Barger comes to the Intermediate to share the story with all the new leaders each summer to inspire them to make a difference in our school.

When students are in seventh grade, they learn about the program and how to be a leader in our school at a fall retreat called "Starfish Days Away." The students also learn about how to be a team and work with people other

than their friends in their classes. As the year continues, Starfish leaders are involved in many service activities, such as Staff Appreciation Day, lollipop fundraisers, weekend backpack programs, an Autism fundraiser, birthday posters, the Student of the Month program, Starfish Art Committee, and Scheduling Open House.

On April 24, Starfish leaders will assist with "Day Without Hate," a national day where students are encouraged to be kind to each other and understand that we all come to school with our own baggage. Current Starfish leaders, teachers, and some seventh graders who show interest will organize activities to encourage kindness. "Day Without Hate" is a national day that started after a shooting at Virginia Tech. Last year, students created a paper chain to hang in the library with kind sayings showing that we are all loved. They also made paper bricks with positive messages to put on the walls in the hallways for students to see. In classes, students watched related videos and held discussions throughout the day. "I'm not sure what activities we will host this year yet. We will leave that up to the committee, but I'm sure that they will be meaningful!" commented Mrs. Minch.

Seventh grade students who are interested in becoming Starfish leaders next year are encouraged to let their teachers know and to lead by example. "We will ask students in homeroom if they are interested in participating in our summer training, and then teachers will nominate their students in April. From there, we will invite potential leaders to a meeting during activity period," said Mrs. Minch.

Mrs. Snyder added, "We are always looking for enthusiastic new leaders. As teachers, any time we ever need someone we can trust to do something, we ask our Starfish leaders."

Butler Introduces Flexible Instructional Days

By Chloe Laidlaw and Addison Tack

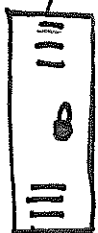
This year the state of Pennsylvania granted Butler Area School District the right to use Flexible Instructional Days for

circumstances that prevent the district from operating in its customary manner. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education website, these days may be used for events such as "a disease epidemic, a hazardous weather condition, a law enforcement emergency, the inoperability of school buses or other equipment necessary to the public school entity's operation, damage to a school building, or a temporary circumstance rendering any portion of the school building unfit or unsafe for use."

Butler's first FID took place on Wednesday, November 27, the day before Thanksgiving break. On that day, students were to complete assignments for each of their classes. Each assignment was supposed to replace the work in each class. Teachers notified parents beforehand about how they could be reached during the day should questions have arisen about the work students were completing independently. All students were then given a window of time to complete the work and return it for credit.

According to Dr. White, Pennsylvania started the FID program because many districts were missing school days due to weather, and it was becoming more and more difficult to avoid adding them on to the end of the year. He added that weather can be particularly tricky in Butler due to the size of the district. "Our school district is 150 square miles, and the weather is often different in one part of town than the other," he said. As a result, Flexible Instructional Days are a good option for Butler because they provide just what the name states... flexibility.

Districts interested in utilizing the new program had to submit an application, documentation, and a detailed plan for approval. Butler Area School District is approved to use FID days for three years. Because Flexible Instructional Days are only used for emergencies, they will be planned at least two days ahead of time. "If we were to have another FID day this year, the process would stay the same, but there would just be less time to prepare," commented Dr. White. For November 27, administration and staff carefully planned the steps to eliminate as much confusion as



possible. Attendance was taken by students turning in each of their class assignments.

Two other local districts, Mars and Seneca, use the FID option. Although these neighboring districts use a similar FID plan, they rely mainly on technology for the assignments, unlike Butler. For now, teachers were asked to provide an assignment that did not require technology to complete.

Following the first Flexible Instructional Day, the administration surveyed teachers, students, and parents for feedback. Overall, Dr. White said most people found the FID useful, but they preferred that we don't use them unless needed. Mr. Liparulo, a seventh grade science teacher, likes the FID option. "It provides flexibility to make up for snow days, and some years, we really need that." Brielle Pinto agreed. "I liked it because I can do the same amount of work and do it in less time," she said. On the other hand, some students such as Carter Blystone would rather make up the day at school.

Mr. Liparulo explained that faculty participated in additional professional development activities and maintained an active line of communication during typical school hours. Although the year so far has been relatively mild weather-wise, Dr. White believes Flexible Instructional Days are a good solution for our district to use after snow days are exhausted.

Students Follow Locker Guidelines

By Kathryn Wingerson and Lily Swanson

Students at Butler Intermediate High-school use lockers daily for their books, lunch bags, gym clothes, and other personal items. Several rules provide students with guidelines when utilizing lockers.

Students may access their lockers four times a day: before homeroom, before lunch, after lunch, and after seventh period. "This rule is in place to cut down on time in the hallways," said Mr. Dun, the assistant principal. Lockers are also shared by two students who are in the same homeroom. These partners are chosen at the beginning of the year and are placed alphabetically. The locks are issued by the school

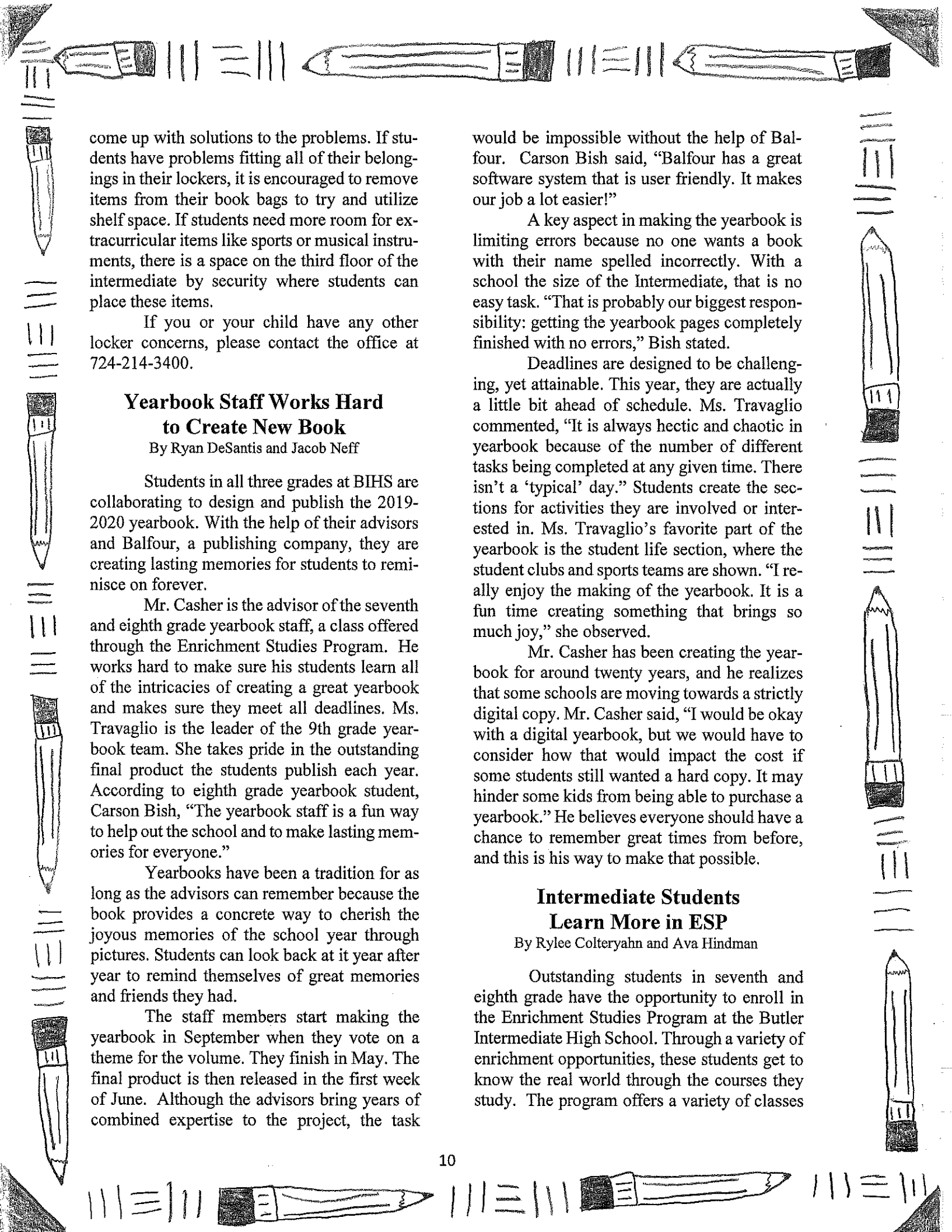
district, reminding students that the lockers are property of the school.

Smaller lockers are also available to use for gym and swimming classes in the locker rooms. Students are also able to use these lockers for their sports seasons to hold their equipment. Just like the lockers in the hallways, these gym lockers should have a lock on them at all times. According to Mrs Kauffman, a physical education teacher, "Stealing is the number one problem for girls in the locker room." With the locker rooms being constantly used, some people try to steal things from students bags such as electronics or clothes. Cameras are put outside the door of the locker rooms so if something is reported stolen, they can try to see who went into the locker room at that specific time. Students should put locks on the locker room lockers so they don't get their items stolen. Unlike the homeroom lockers, these locks must be provided by the student.

Locker searches are also used to help keep the school and its students safe. These locker searches are scheduled on an "as needed" basis throughout the year. Police dogs come around the school to check for anything suspicious in the students' lockers. If something is detected by one of the dogs, they are then allowed to search the student's locker and everything inside it.

If students forget the locker combinations, they can go to the office and talk to Ms. Browne. The office has a record of all the students' locker combinations that she can easily access if a student needs it. If there is any time where a student cannot open their locker, the first thing he would do is to find a teacher in the hall and if there is no one available, report to the main office. The teacher and the office staff will try the best they can to help, but if they are not successful, they will radio the daytime custodian to help. "There hasn't been a locker he can't fix," said Mr. Dunn.

Since locker partners are not chosen, some students may run into issues with their locker partners. If this happens, the student can address this with their homeroom teacher, guidance counselor, or anyone in the main office. The teachers will try to resolve the troubles and



come up with solutions to the problems. If students have problems fitting all of their belongings in their lockers, it is encouraged to remove items from their book bags to try and utilize shelf space. If students need more room for extracurricular items like sports or musical instruments, there is a space on the third floor of the intermediate by security where students can place these items.

If you or your child have any other locker concerns, please contact the office at 724-214-3400.

Yearbook Staff Works Hard to Create New Book

By Ryan DeSantis and Jacob Neff

Students in all three grades at BIHS are collaborating to design and publish the 2019-2020 yearbook. With the help of their advisors and Balfour, a publishing company, they are creating lasting memories for students to reminisce on forever.

Mr. Casher is the advisor of the seventh and eighth grade yearbook staff, a class offered through the Enrichment Studies Program. He works hard to make sure his students learn all of the intricacies of creating a great yearbook and makes sure they meet all deadlines. Ms. Travaglio is the leader of the 9th grade yearbook team. She takes pride in the outstanding final product the students publish each year. According to eighth grade yearbook student, Carson Bish, "The yearbook staff is a fun way to help out the school and to make lasting memories for everyone."

Yearbooks have been a tradition for as long as the advisors can remember because the book provides a concrete way to cherish the joyous memories of the school year through pictures. Students can look back at it year after year to remind themselves of great memories and friends they had.

The staff members start making the yearbook in September when they vote on a theme for the volume. They finish in May. The final product is then released in the first week of June. Although the advisors bring years of combined expertise to the project, the task

would be impossible without the help of Balfour. Carson Bish said, "Balfour has a great software system that is user friendly. It makes our job a lot easier!"

A key aspect in making the yearbook is limiting errors because no one wants a book with their name spelled incorrectly. With a school the size of the Intermediate, that is no easy task. "That is probably our biggest responsibility: getting the yearbook pages completely finished with no errors," Bish stated.

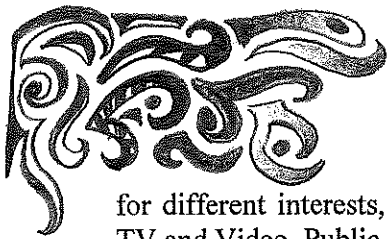
Deadlines are designed to be challenging, yet attainable. This year, they are actually a little bit ahead of schedule. Ms. Travaglio commented, "It is always hectic and chaotic in yearbook because of the number of different tasks being completed at any given time. There isn't a 'typical' day." Students create the sections for activities they are involved or interested in. Ms. Travaglio's favorite part of the yearbook is the student life section, where the student clubs and sports teams are shown. "I really enjoy the making of the yearbook. It is a fun time creating something that brings so much joy," she observed.

Mr. Casher has been creating the yearbook for around twenty years, and he realizes that some schools are moving towards a strictly digital copy. Mr. Casher said, "I would be okay with a digital yearbook, but we would have to consider how that would impact the cost if some students still wanted a hard copy. It may hinder some kids from being able to purchase a yearbook." He believes everyone should have a chance to remember great times from before, and this is his way to make that possible.

Intermediate Students Learn More in ESP

By Rylee Colteryahn and Ava Hindman

Outstanding students in seventh and eighth grade have the opportunity to enroll in the Enrichment Studies Program at the Butler Intermediate High School. Through a variety of enrichment opportunities, these students get to know the real world through the courses they study. The program offers a variety of classes



for different interests, some of which include TV and Video, Public Speaking, and Drama.

Mr. Cochran has been teaching the ESP course TV and Video for the last 10-12 years, and he looks forward to it each day. "I enjoy teaching students about modern-day technology," he said.

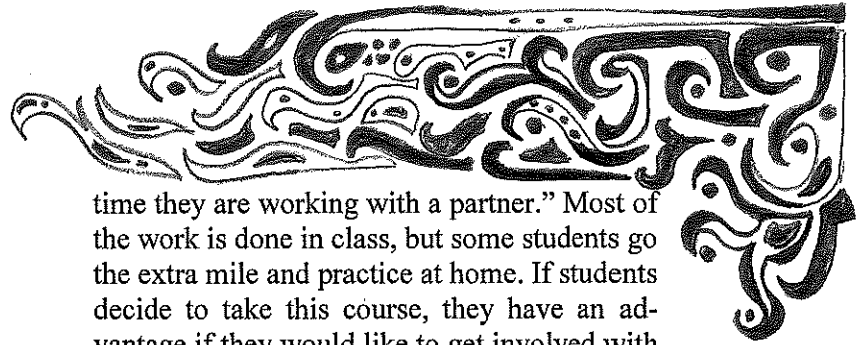
Students like Makayla McLister learn how to create and finish projects by using good time management, and they discover something new every day. "This course can help students in the future with preplanning, problem solving, and organization," commented Mr. Cochran. In this course, half of the students are producing a video for the contest "What's So Cool About Manufacturing," while the other half are working on a presentation called "What is ESP?" which will be shown to incoming seventh graders.

According to Mr. Cochran, "Because of the nature of the class, there is no typical day." Students are also not given any outside work. "The equipment is here at school, so 99.9% of the class is done during school hours," he said. All of the work is completed in small groups or with partners.

Under the direction of Mr. Cochran, TV and Video has become one of the most popular ESP classes offered at the IHS. Makayla McLister commented, "I am really enjoying this class so far and highly recommend it to other students."

For five years, Mrs. Mahood has been teaching Public Speaking to students such as Lily Vicari to help them get over their fear of stage fright and talking in front of others. Mrs. Mahood feels that everyone can benefit from the class. "Public speaking is a skill that students will use for the rest of their lives," she said. She is also very proud of the ESP program and what it offers students. She commented, "ESP in general is a great way for students to explore new topics in a non-threatening way."

The plan for the day varies in Public Speaking because some days they are planning, others they are presenting, or sometimes they are studying professional speakers. According to Mrs. Mahood, "Sixty percent of the time, students are giving speeches, and 40% of the



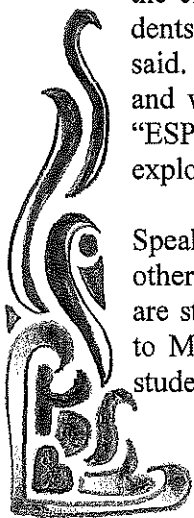
time they are working with a partner." Most of the work is done in class, but some students go the extra mile and practice at home. If students decide to take this course, they have an advantage if they would like to get involved with Mock Trial.

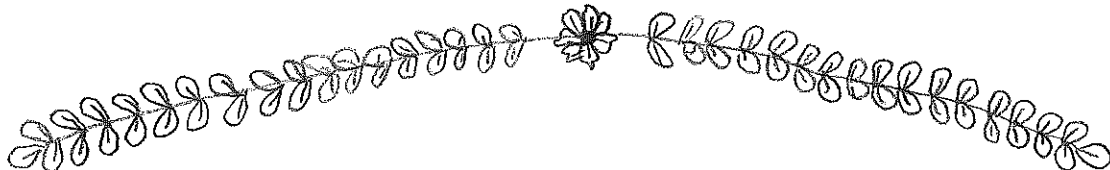
Lily Vicari and the other students are currently working on their demonstration speeches, where they explain how to do one of their personal favorite hobbies. Lily commented, "You only have outside work if you didn't finish an assignment or if you need materials." Even if students are confident and comfortable in themselves when speaking in front of others, this course helps to improve their skills. According to Lily, "In the future, this class will help me to talk in front of others and not be as nervous."

For the past three years, Mrs. Waseleski has been teaching drama to students that enjoy singing and acting such as Lauren Beneigh. On February 27, the Drama ESP class will be performing the play, "Alice and Wonderland," at 6 p.m. in the auditorium. Tickets will cost \$3 for students, while adults will pay \$5. For the last nine weeks, the cast has been preparing for the play, learning various acting techniques. According to Mrs. Waseleski, "The main focus of the class is being able to perform in front of an audience and feeling comfortable in front of peers and colleagues." Mrs. Waseleski evaluates her students through self-reflections and peer evaluations. She also believes that the enrichment offerings help students. "Learning different content expands your interests and development," she observed.

Each class day follows a distinct pattern in this ESP class. Before they start, students are permitted to set the stage for the starting scene. Throughout the class period, they change the props and characters to prepare for the next scene. At the end of class, they regroup and discuss acting notes.

Lauren Beneigh enjoys working the curtains the most. "I highly recommend this course to other students because you make new friends, and it is a fun and funny experience," she said. Outside of class, Lauren and her





classmates are required to practice their lines and help out with classrooms.

Students will find out over the next few weeks if they are eligible to take ESP courses. If it is a possibility for your son or daughter, it is sure to be an experience he/she will enjoy while learning some new and challenging material.

Activity Period Helps Make BIHS a Better Place

By Chloe Laidlaw and Addison Tack

At the beginning of seventh period from 12:55-1:15 p.m., students and teachers at the BIHS participate in activity period, a time for clubs, advisory, and academic recovery.

On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, activity period is used for social activities, making up work, or doing homework. Clubs meet on assigned days. For instance, Encore meets on Mondays, Student Council meets on Wednesdays, FCA and Ukulele meet on Friday, and some other clubs meet once a month on designated days. This time also allows for informational meetings for sports, scheduling, field trips, and other events. If students do not have clubs on these days, they spend the time completing homework, receiving extra help, or reading quietly. Avery Maier, a student at the BIHS, stated, "I like activity period because it helps me get my homework done."

During the advisory days, which are on Tuesday and Thursday, students and teachers participate in activities before their seventh period classes. The students learn about topics such as peer pressure, decision making, college and career readiness, and life skills. According to Avery, "The activities help me plan for my future and make me a better student." Lydia Mohny agreed, "Advisory helps me become a better person and also guides me in making good choices."

Mrs. Neigh, a seventh grade math teacher and member of the SOAR team, said, "Advisory gives the teachers time to directly teach the students about expectations in school and important life skills that we don't normally have an opportunity to teach in class." All

teachers have presented lessons and led discussions on expected behaviors in different parts of the building in all grades at this point. Additional review lessons will be incorporated this spring too.

Each grade participates in a variety of grade-level appropriate advisory activities as well. Seventh grade also learns about general life skills, like peer pressure and how to handle it. The activity manual that teachers are given is formatted with the date of which activity to do and where the teachers can find it.

Eighth graders also do very similar activities, but they talk more about preparing for the future. They also attend more assemblies to prepare for scheduling next year. They participate in activities such as career terminology and setting priorities.

Ninth graders participate in activities to make a path for their future. For example, they work on life skills and how to decide their career or jobs. They also participate in DEAR days and strategic ways to study or prepare for a test, along with seventh and eighth graders. As they get older, it becomes more and more important to make good choices, and these activities guide them to do so.


The hope is that activity period and advisory will continue to evolve to meet the needs of all students.

Spring Sports Season Starting Soon

By Kaitlynn Plopi and Alexis Frye

Spring athletes are anxious for the end of cold weather and ready to take the field, track, and court. The tennis, boys' volleyball, baseball, track, and softball teams look forward to having productive seasons, officially starting at the beginning of March.

Coach Walsh's varsity tennis team's season starts on March 2. There will be a maximum of 20 athletes on the team, but he thinks that means that everyone will make the team who wants to play. If there are more than 20 athletes, then there will be tryouts the first three days of practice. The school provides most of the equipment, but the athletes will need a good pair of tennis shoes and a tennis racket.



According to Coach Walsh, "My expectation is that all of my athletes give their best and have fun." One of their team goals is making it to playoffs. Practices will be at the senior high tennis courts, two hours every day. "A typical practice will consist of a warm up, footwork drills, normal drills, and a match," commented Coach Walsh. There will be 12-13 games: four away and the rest home. The team anticipates that North Allegheny and Sewickley Academy are going to be their toughest opponents.

Coach Liparulo's varsity boys' volleyball also starts on March 2. On both JV and varsity, the coaching staff can roster 30 boys. Liparulo plans to keep everyone on the team in JV, but in varsity if he has to make cuts, then he will. The school provides everything except the athletes have to have a good pair of shoes. Coach Liparulo expects a positive attitude from his team. "The players should learn, respect themselves and the people around them, and have a willingness to fail but learn from it," he said. His goals for the team are to make it to playoffs, and he wants them to improve.

Practices will be held Monday-Friday. A typical practice consists of a warm up, set up nets, stretch, cardio workout, skills, team drills, and a cool down. There are about 20 games per season, and Coach Liparulo anticipates that North Allegheny, Shaler, and Seneca Valley will be their toughest opponents. Coach Liparulo has been coaching for 12 years. "I like working with the kids, and I like the sport. Put those together, and you can't beat it," he said.

Coach Buzzard's baseball season has already been working hard in open gyms, but the season officially starts in the beginning of March. The roster for freshman baseball, which includes both eighth and ninth graders, will be a maximum of 19 players. The students need to buy their own equipment, including a glove, bat, and cleats.

Coach Buzzard hopes that the team will improve on their skills throughout the season. As far as expectations: "I expect my team to have an open mind, to be coachable, determined, honest, and have a good work ethic," he said. On warm days, practice will be held at

Highfield Park right after school until 4:45, but on not so warm days, the athletes will most likely be moved to the high school gym. A typical practice consists of stretching, conditioning, fundamentals, hitting, fielding, and then a live game. Coach Buzzard anticipates that Pine Richland, Central Catholic, and Seneca Valley will be the toughest teams. According to Coach Buzzard, coaching baseball is a rewarding experience. He said, "I love to help young men build themselves into better athletes."

Coach Seybert's varsity track and field starts March 2nd. Anyone can join because there is no limit to the number of athletes on the team. All that is required is that the participants need to have a pair of shoes that they can run in. Coach Seybert expects an awesome attitude from the teams, and he has big goals for his athletes. "I want to win WPIAL team titles on both sides and to have kids qualify for state championships," he said. The athletes practice at the senior high outdoor track/annex Monday through Friday and sometimes Saturday. Seybert believes that North Allegheny and Seneca Valley will be the toughest teams.

Coach Baxter's softball season starts in March, but pre-season started in August. She plans to keep 30-35 girls or however many jerseys she has. To play, the athletes need to have a bat and a glove. Practices will be held at the Senior High School at the fields inside or outside for four days a week.

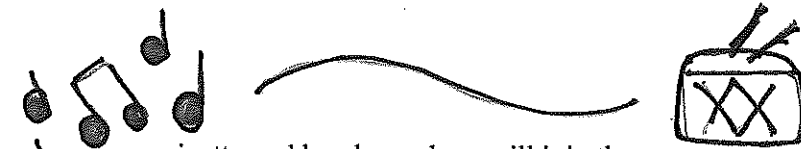
Baxter expects her team to have a positive and winning attitude, and she wants to make it to playoffs. She anticipates that North Allegheny will be the toughest opponent. To Coach Baxter, softball season is the best time of year. "As soon as I got out of softball as a player, I jumped into coaching. I love it," she said.

Best of luck to all of the spring athletes and coaches as they begin their seasons!

Butler Marching Band Prepares for Next Season


By Charlotte Dickey and Cierra Carrero

The Butler Marching Band holds auditions every January during midterm week. New




sequinette and band members will join the program for the following season.

The Marching Band Program is directed by Jeffrey Kroner along with Sara McLafferty, the director of the Sequinette Program. Each winter, students eighth grade and older, have the option to audition for sequinettes for the following school year. In band classes, they also have auditions to join the Marching Band. The number of selected band and sequinette members varies from year to year.

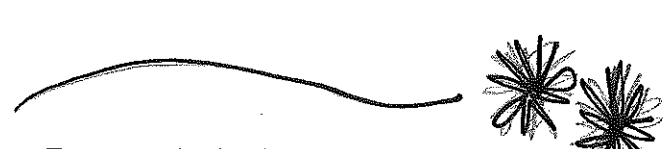


Butler Golden Tornado Marching Band, including the sequinette dancers and flag team, runs deep with tradition. For sequinettes, dancers must audition as a freshman and re-audition as veterans to maintain their spots on the team. The audition process is always hard and stressful for everyone, but in the end it is hopefully worth it. Director Sara McLafferty commented, "The physical demand of sequinette is the hardest challenge."


To start off, every season begins in August with Band Camp. Band Camp is the way sequinettes and band members prepare for the long, hard season. During camp, dancers and band members train from 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Once the school year starts, flag team and sequinettes have an assigned class period to learn choreography and to exercise. The learned choreography is then used in performances during Butler football games every Friday.



Throughout the season, the sequinettes, flags, and band are invited to parades in many different states. The program also sets up trips for all members of each group every year.

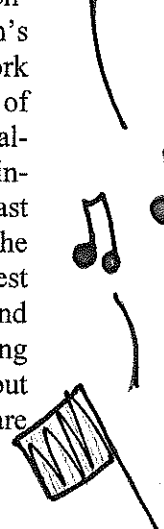


For example, for the 2020-2021 season, the marching band has the opportunity to go to Disney World over Christmas break. When in Disney, the groups will perform in an annual parade and represent Butler. "I truly feel this group is the strongest it has ever been," said Mrs. McLafferty.



According to veteran sequinette, Caroline Rundle, "Even though sequinettes can be stressful and challenging, it is all completely worth it in the end." Caroline has only been in Sequinettes for one season, but she still loves it. She commented, "Sequinettes is my life!" Soon-to-be Sequinette, eighth grader Lauren Birchbickler, is excited for her first season. Her experience for her first audition was overall thrilling. Lauren is eager to perform as a new sequinette and said, "I am looking forward to learning sequinette choreography and showcasing Butler in parades and football games."

Mr. Kroner, the director of the marching band, is extremely proud of the program's legacy. He stated, "I am very blessed to work with a group that has such a rich tradition of excellence." The Butler Marching Band challenges every single one of its members to maintain the high standards that bands of the past have set. According to Mr. Kroner, "The amount of time and energy the students invest to maintain and improve this group is beyond what people realize." Members of marching band not only learn the band curriculum, but students also learn leadership skills that are then applied to all areas of the school.



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