



# ALL ABOUT FACILITIES

#BPATRIOTPROUD  
APRIL 2024

BELIEVE BELONG BECOME

*Our mission is to provide a supportive, safe and engaging school environment that embraces each and everyone to believe in themselves, to belong, and to become successful.*

Dear BCSD Families,

With two months to go in our school year, it's an exciting and busy time here at the Binghamton City School District. I am pleased to be bringing to you our fourth single issue newsletter. It is hard to believe that just a year ago we were concluding our communication audit, from which the concept of these newsletters was suggested.

Whether you have a child at the elementary level or your student is closing in on graduation, you've undoubtedly had time to be at some of our BCSD buildings. By visiting our schools, you also have seen some of the wonderful facilities and spaces used by your child. From new classroom technology, to fitness rooms and athletic fields, to spaces where they can explore their bodies and minds, BCSD quite literally has something for everyone.

As recently as a generation ago, some of the facilities and equipment we now have were considered to be unnecessary or even "luxury" items. But as education has evolved, the District - and the community that supports it - has come to realize that these spaces are necessary offering the best educational experience for our student body. But it's not just students who benefit from our facilities; they have become gathering places for our entire community as well.

In this edition of All About Facilities, you'll read about the variety of fields, gymnasiums, theaters, and more used by thousands of students and community members. Learn about what improvements the District has planned to make them even better. Re-discover the Facilities Study the district conducted two years ago. And find out how you can reserve space for an event or meeting.

With Patriot Pride,

Tonia

Dr. Tonia Thompson  
Superintendent of Schools

## Update to Theodore Roosevelt Renovation Project

Just this past week, we [officially announced](#) that our state legislatures were able to advocate and secure additional funding for Theodore Roosevelt Elementary renovation/rebuild. Included in the 2024-2025 New York State Budget is language that allows our district to access twice as much funding from the state than we would. With this increase in upfront funding, the renovation project at Roosevelt is expected to take between four and five years to complete. Without it, the project would last an estimated 25 years, and cost significantly more.



The school building was constructed in 1970. The project will include a new classroom wing, and renovation and abatement of the cafeteria, gymnasium, library, and other support areas. Additionally, the building will get an upgraded security system, intrusion detection system, emergency notification system, public address system, new windows, and new doors. The existing Teddy Bear Clinic will receive upgrades as well.

It's been a long road to get to this point. The whole process began with a districtwide feasibility study, which was commissioned in May 2021, on the state of our ten school buildings, as well as the current/future uses of those buildings and determining what renovations should take place in order for us to best support our students and community. Factors like enrollment, academic opportunities & challenges, transportation factors, and building conditions were all taken into consideration when determining the possible paths forward. A series of nine community forums took place in the summer and fall of 2022 for those in our district and in the City of Binghamton to learn more about what was being taken under consideration in the feasibility study and to provide input. The BCSD Board of Education reviewed all this feedback and decided at the December 2022 board meeting that the district would work toward seeking funding for rebuilding Roosevelt Elementary.

A bill to allow the district to access more funding up front was introduced to the New York State Assembly and Senate by NYS Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo and NYS Senator Lea Webb. Although NYS Governor Kathy Hochul vetoed the bill in December 2023, she indicated that she was committed to working with our legislators and the district to come to a solution that would help secure funding to go toward the project. [Advocacy](#) for the project included the needs of the Northside families. A public vote will be held later this year in support of accessing the district's Capital Reserve in order to fund the entire project.

The district continues to review enrollment trends. The majority of New York State school systems have seen a decline in enrollment. The full Feasibility Study report can be found [here](#). We would like to thank every single person who attended the community forums as part of the feasibility study or reached out to provide input. We greatly appreciate your attention and commitment to the success of our students!



(L to R): Roosevelt Principal David Chilson, NYS Senator Lea Webb, BCSD Superintendent Dr. Tonia Thompson, and NYS Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo at a press conference on April 24 announcing support for Roosevelt Elementary being included in the NYS budget

## Update on the 2021 Capital Project

Back in December 2021, voters headed to the polls and approved the district's \$41.7 million capital project proposal. This project, which has no impact on the district's tax levy, features numerous upgrades to the district's buildings and facilities to make sure our students are learning in safe, state-of-the-art spaces.



Take a look below at what's already been completed and work that is on the horizon:

### Work Already Completed

- New fire alarms, wifi, security, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems (BHS, EMS, WMS, Wilson, Mann, Coolidge, and Jefferson)
- New Field at West Middle School

### Summer 2024

- BHS – Work on renovation of old Main Street entrance, renovation of unused stairwell in Building A, replacement of cafeteria flooring, and renovation of the career center
- Jefferson – First-floor gender-neutral bathroom renovations and replacement of small section of roof
- Franklin – Renovation of first-floor west corridor, bathrooms, and classrooms

- Coolidge – Repair and re-caulking of windows
- Chiller and rooftop unit replacement (BHS, EMS, WMS)
- New phone systems at multiple schools
- Additional work on fire alarms, wifi, security, phone, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems (Coolidge and Jefferson)

### 2024-2025 School Year

- BHS – Continued work on renovating Building A stairwell during school breaks

### Summer 2025

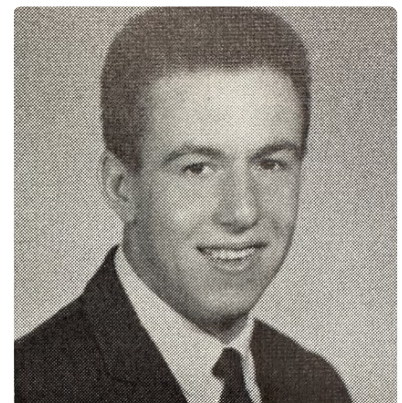
- BHS – Continued work on recreation of old Main Street entrance, continued work on renovating Building A stairwell, replacement of sections of sidewalk, replacement of motorized gates at parking garage, replacement of Pre-K playscape surface, renovations of corridors and bathrooms
- EMS – Replacement of turf, scoreboard, track surface, and driveway at Alumni Stadium. There will also be replacement of the school marquee, driveways on north and south sides of the building, and sections of sidewalk
- Wilson – Repair of retaining walls, replacement of cheek walls and handrails
- Mann – Replacement of three boilers and six boiler pumps
- Coolidge – New ADA parking signs and handrails to stairs. Replacement of the school marquee and water pipes
- Jefferson – New handrails at southeast entrance stairs and replacement of damaged sections of sidewalk
- Franklin – Continued work on renovation of first-floor east corridor, bathrooms, and classrooms
- MacArthur – New engineered wood at the playscape and reconstruction of the storm drains
- Maintenance Building – Construction of ADA-accessible sidewalk at the main entrance

### Summer 2026

- BHS – Building a music and broadcasting recording studio, along with guidance office suite renovations
- EMS – Rescue window installation in Classroom S21, renovation of first-floor gender-neutral restroom and storage room
- WMS – Replacement of concrete stairs on southwest side of the building and replacement of damaged sections of sidewalk. Renovation of AP offices and gender-neutral bathroom
- Mann – Renovations to the gymnasium

### Restoring the Historic BHS Main Street Entrance -- John Whalen (BCHS '60)

*A bit of news that should especially please our alums -- We're working to restore on the most public-facing and historic parts of Binghamton High School! Following the merger of Binghamton Central & Binghamton North back in the 1980s, new entrances were added on Main & Oak Streets. The original entrance was built in 1916 and the renovation will restore the steps from the sidewalk to the front doors at the top of the Main Street lawn, as well as other components of the original entrance providing better access to*



JOHN WHALEN

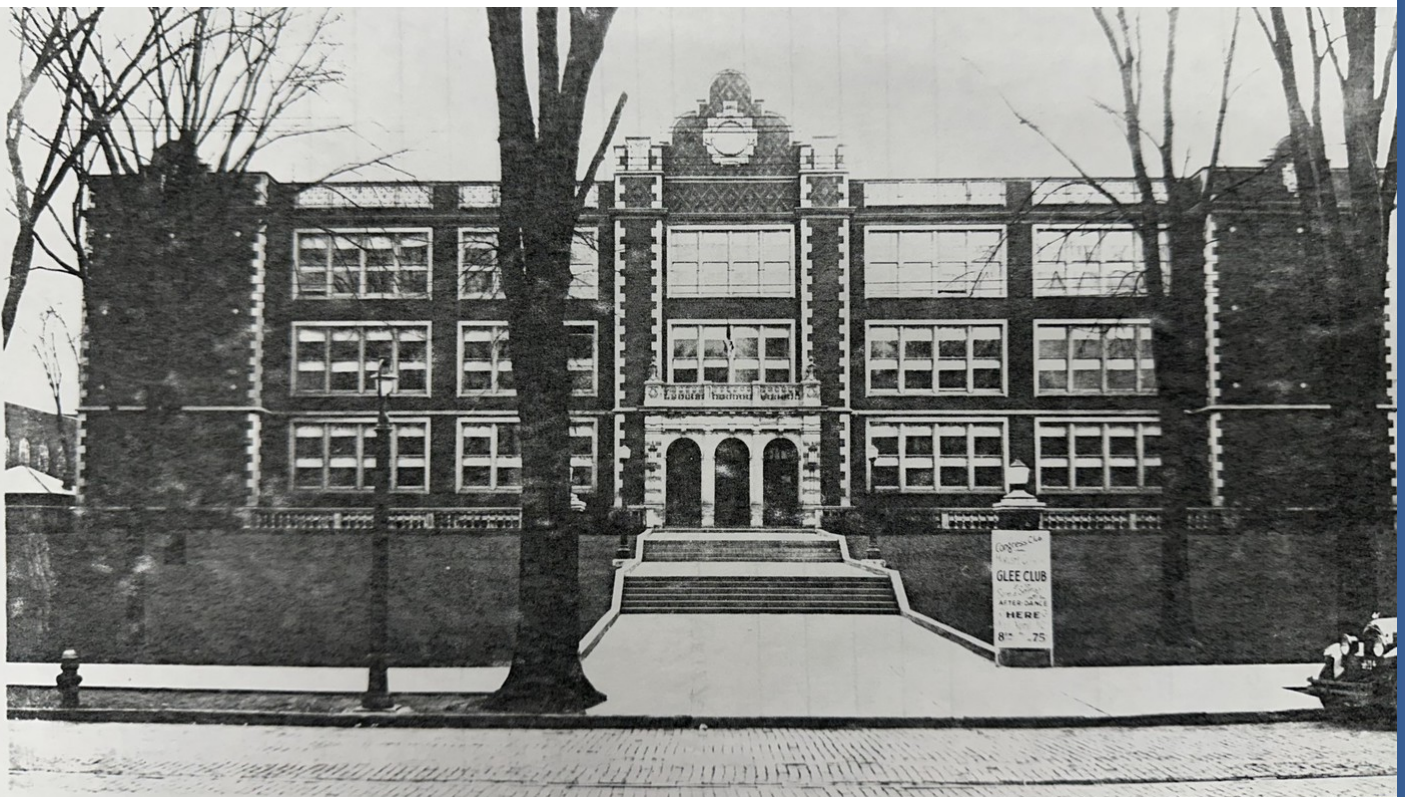
events at the Helen Foley Theatre. Work on the entrance begins this summer, and last year the district received a [\\$500,000 grant to go toward the project.](#)

We spoke to John Whalen, a 1960 graduate of Binghamton Central High School, about what he remembers from that entrance and how restoring it will give students a blast from the past.

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When we were in school at the old Binghamton Central, we never thought twice about the entrance - it was just where we went inside when we got there. But looking back, there was something very inviting about the old entrance and layout of that school - when you came in, the principal's office was on one side and the library entrance on the other, and the theater straight ahead. The way it was set up seemed very natural. And when you left, you had the Acme Market right across the street, and Montgomery Ward next to that - definitely a very small-town feel to that stretch of Main Street. There was a group of us that was responsible for decorating a tree every year during the holidays. We'd run across the street to Montgomery Ward, buy a tree, and run it back across the street to put in front of the main entrance.

Years later when my kids went to the "new" Binghamton High School, there was still a Main Street entrance, but it was connected to the new building and seemed set really far back from the road. Then the other entrance was tucked back in the corner of the courtyard on Oak Street - the new main entrance on Oak is much more welcoming to students and visitors. Renovating that old entrance at the top of the lawn on Main Street will be a lot more convenient for people coming for special events. It will also give them a feel of what it was like for us over 60 years ago.



## **EMS Fieldhouse Project -- Jeramiah Johnson, Binghamton City School District Director of Athletics**

*One of the largest and most recognizable spaces in the district, Alumni Stadium hosts games for multiple sports. The project to bring several updates to the stadium is well underway. Director of Athletics Jeramiah Johnson give us preview of what to expect:*

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We are working on facility enhancements at Alumni Stadium. The field house at Alumni Stadium is currently under construction. The field house is being remodeled, which includes the two existing locker rooms, athletic training room, and officials' areas. This will give our student athletes a locker room that can also serve as a meeting area. The upgrades to the Athletic Training room will give students a large space to be seen and treated in.



At the end of the 2024-2025 school year there will be improvements made to the field and track at Alumni Stadium. The resurfacing of the track will help even the surface and remove areas in which the track has started to crack. The upgrade to the turf falls in line with the 10-year resurfacing plan for turf fields.

It is our hope that these improvements at Alumni Stadium will give our Students, Athletes and community at state-of-the-art facility to enjoy and be proud of.





**Theatres and Auditoriums -- Larry Kassan, Binghamton City School District Theater and Special Events Coordinator**

*One of the best ways to instill a sense of togetherness in our schools is by gathering in our buildings for assemblies, performances, and other events for all to have a shared experience with one another. On the elementary level, the gymnasiums of Coolidge and MacArthur Elementary Schools serve as the gathering hub, and those gymnasiums feature large stages to accommodate*

*large assemblies. Roosevelt and Wilson feature large stages in their cafeterias to serve as an assembly space as well.*

*Our district also takes great pride in our dedicated auditoriums at Binghamton High School, East Middle School, West Middle School, and Franklin Elementary School. The 1024- person capacity auditorium at Franklin so far this year has held an informational solar eclipse lesson from Kopernik Observatory, a community event with motivational speaker Dr. Tommie Mabry, a performance of Moana Jr. The 761-person capacity East Middle School Auditorium and nearly 1,500-person capacity West Middle School auditorium year in and year out have been major venues for numerous choral, band, dance, and theatrical performances for decades. Last but not least, Binghamton High School's Helen Foley Theatre, named after the local teaching legend and mentor to BHS alum Rod Serling is one of the gems of the Southern Tier.*



*BCSD Theater and Special Events Coordinator Larry Kassan knows this theatre and its history better than anyone, and outlines its lifespan:*

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The Helen Foley Theatre at Binghamton High School is considered by many to be the most beautiful arts facility throughout the Greater Binghamton area. Built in 1914 it was fully renovated when both Binghamton Central and Binghamton North merged in 1982. Its last major renovation was in 2009 as a large capital projects update including new seats, state of the art lighting and an updated art gallery. The "HFT" hosts all the performance needs of the Rod Serling School of Fine Arts at BHS as well as numerous community arts organizations. It seats over 800 (orchestra and balcony levels) and inside you'll find the original stained glass as well as Tiffany lamp shades.

***For information on how to reserve one of our district's auditoriums, see the "How To Reserve BCSD Facilities" section at the end of this newsletter, or contact Phyllis Castner at (607)762-6055.***



Serling Day Assembly at BHS Helen Foley Theatre



Black History Month Celebration at EMS Auditorium



Spring Concert at WMS Auditorium



Kopernik Science Lesson at Franklin Auditorium

**Middle School Dance Facilities -- Tina Christina-Price, BCSD Dance Teacher**

*If you've been to any of our amazing dance concerts in the district, you'll know that plenty of hard work and practice goes into each routine, and all that work is done in our district's dance rooms at Binghamton High School and both our middle schools. In recent years, the dance rooms at East and West Middle School have been renovated to give students a state of the art space to learn and practice.*



*One of our district's dance teachers, Tina Christina-Price, explains how its the fine details that make these studios an ideal place for students to learn the art of dance.*

When I took the position of Middle School Dance Teacher my classroom was the stage. While most would think a dance teacher would love to teach on a stage. It was not ideal. Learning about dance takes place in a dance studio. It's where students learn technique, explore movement possibilities and create dances to be performed on stage.

I can remember the day Ms. McGarry, our former Fine Arts Department Chair, shared the plans to renovate our middle school dance studios. She asked my opinion knowing I had designed several dance studios in the past. My top priority was a sprung floor. This type of floor reduces long term injury to students and instructors.

The floors installed in our studios were engineered in Fort Worth Texas by L'Air International in Fort Worth, Texas. In addition to our East/West dance studios these floors have been installed in the finest theaters, dance companies, studios, university dance departments throughout the world. Our studios also feature acoustic ceiling baffles that enhance the quality of the sound system, natural light and high ceilings. Overall the architectural design creates a safe, welcoming and nurturing environment for our students.

My personal favorite is the West studio because of its size. That feature, which is often a luxury, develops a student's awareness of motion in connection to others and their environment.

The BCSD middle school dance studios are beautiful, and our students respond by coming to class with a sense of pride that translates to their willingness to learn about the world of dance through the exploration of movement and creation of new dances.

P.S. I've danced and taught in dance studios all over the world. Our BCSD middle school dance studios are one of finest facilities that I've had the pleasure of working in. Seriously, better than many of the professional studios I've worked in throughout my career.



EMS Dance Room



WMS Dance Room

## West Middle School Field -- Gavin Kozel, WMS 8th Grade Student

*The new athletic field outside West Middle School is a brand-new and welcome addition to the district this school year. This multipurpose turf field replaces the grass athletic field that had been present in the past. The new field features a 100-yard football field with markings for soccer and lacrosse, a 50-yard practice area, and a new softball field with removable outfield fence. We spoke with West Middle School student Gavin Kozel about using the field for physical education classes and sports.*



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**Q:** What's your favorite part of the new field?

**Gavin:** The 50-yard football field by the side.

**Q:** Before we had the new field, what was it like having gym class on that patch of grass that was there?

**Gavin:** The dirt was really bad. It was really hard and during the summertime it would get dry and crusty.

**Q:** How are you and your fellow students enjoying the new field?

**Gavin:** It's great. It allows us to play a lot of different sports during bad weather. An example is last week there were lacrosse teams practicing while there was rain, but if that was a dirt field that would be flooded and we wouldn't be able to play on it.



## Weightlifting Facility at BHS -- Darius Scolaro, BHS Senior

*As any athlete knows, the building blocks to success on the field is by strengthening up your body to be as fast, strong, and explosive as possible. The weight room at Binghamton High School is crucial to that goal. The fitness facility at the high school features plenty of free weights, racks, machines and other equipment to help any athlete build toward success in their sport. Additionally, students can take classes like Training in Physical and Mental Development, as well as Solutions in Fitness and Wellness that utilizes the weight room to guide students to their fitness goals.*



*BHS senior Darius Scolaro is a three-sport athlete who also takes part in these classes, and we spoke with him about how the weight room has been a benefit to him.*

**Q:** How often do you utilize the weight room, either for sports or for the class?

**Darius:** Every day that I come to school. I come down here during ninth period. I get ready, get dressed, and start working out... five days a week.

**Q:** What is your favorite part of the weight room?

**Darius:** Probably the free weights. We have a lot of good free weights.

**Q:** What sort of things do the teachers guide you through for the weight lifting class?

**Darius:** They'll guide us through our workouts, like if there's a workout on the paper, we can ask them any questions, and they'll give us an answer and show us what we need to do.

**Q:** How has the weight room been able to help you in the sports you play?

**Darius:** I feel like it improved my endurance, my muscle strength, and it helps me get into a good mindset before our games. If we have a game, our teachers will let us stretch beforehand or something lighter.





## **BHS Video Monitors -- Kevin Richman, Binghamton High School Principal**

*If you walk through Binghamton High School, you'll notice a series of screens that display a variety of messages -- ranging from informational, to inspirational. Binghamton High School Principal Kevin Richman updates these messages daily, and speaks to how effective they've been at keeping students informed.*

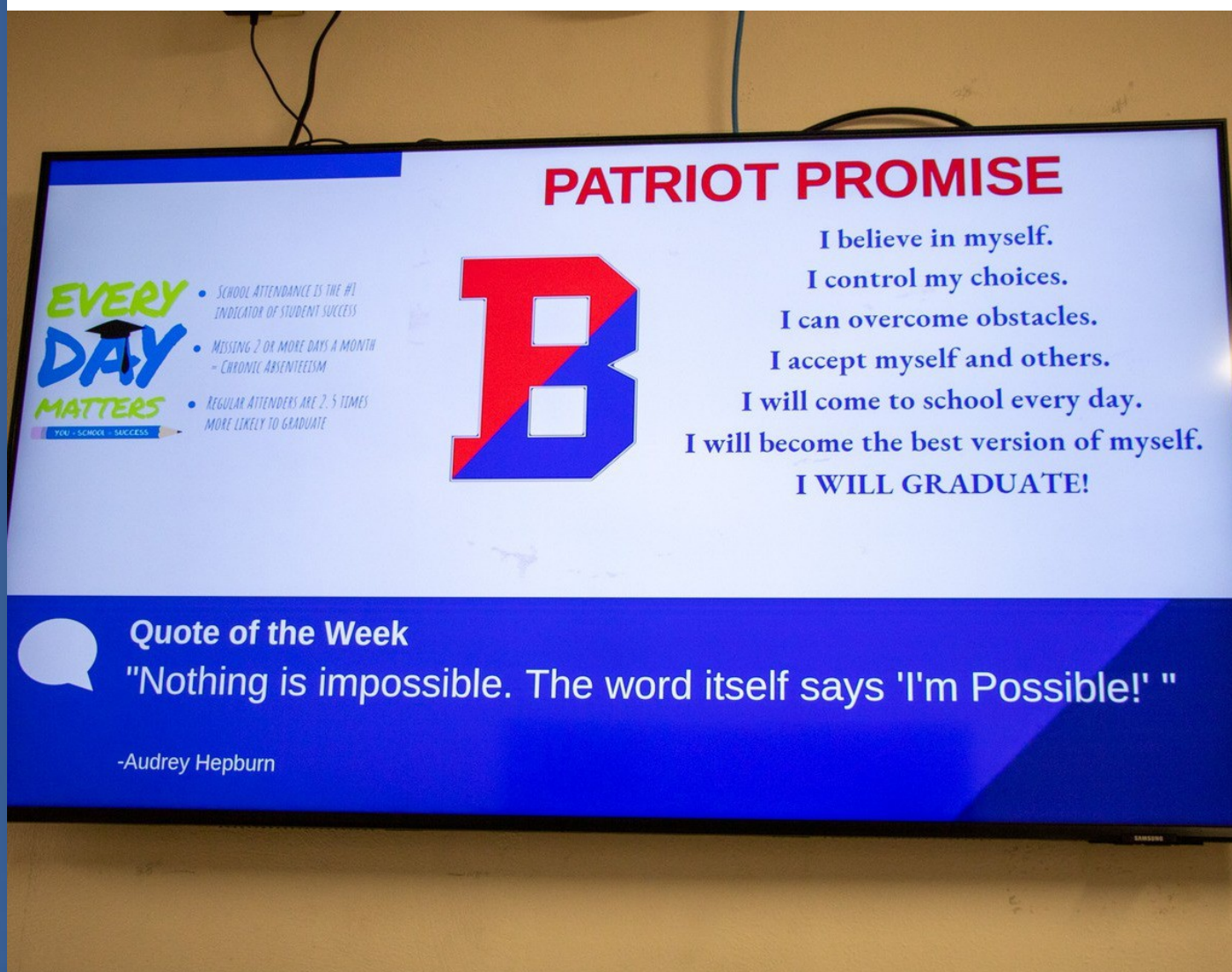
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The video monitors at Binghamton High School have become an indispensable communication hub, enhancing the way information flows within our school. Since their introduction a few years ago, these vibrant displays have revolutionized how we connect and convey messages to our students and staff. Strategically placed throughout the school, they offer real-time updates and important announcements, ensuring that everyone is informed and engaged.



The monitors serve many of purposes, from announcing upcoming college visits to detailing the day's lunch menu. They are a dynamic tool for broadcasting daily bell schedules, day cycles, and specific expectations under our Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework. Moreover, they provide a platform to celebrate achievements, spotlighting exceptional work and milestones reached by both students and staff. The impact of these video monitors has been profound—they not only keep our school community informed about events in the building and the broader community but also foster a sense of inclusion and recognition.

The feedback from both students and faculty has been overwhelmingly positive, with many appreciating how these displays contribute to a lively and informative school atmosphere. Overall, the video monitors have been an amazing addition to our high school, perfectly aligning with our commitment to a proactive and inclusive educational environment.



BHS message board

## **BHS and EMS Pools -- Jake Brigham, BCSD Boys Varsity Swimming and Diving Coach**

*The district has two pools -- one at Binghamton High School, and another at East Middle School. Home to the Binghamton Patriot Swimming and Diving teams, the pools are able to be reserved for community groups who wish to use the space for recreational swimming. For information on how to reserve one of our district's pools, see the "How To Reserve BCSD Facilities" section at the end of this newsletter, or contact Phyllis Castner at (607)762-6055.*



*Jake Brigham is a Binghamton High School graduate and is now one of the coaches in the district swimming program, and discusses the important of our pools' quality in building up the swim program.*

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As the Binghamton City School Boys Varsity Swim & Dive Coach, we use the District's aquatic facilities from November - February each year. Our home facility is located at East Middle School; a six lane, twenty-five yard lap pool with separate diving section equipped with two one-meter diving boards. Having practices in the dead of winter it is nice to have a facility that is easily accessible and warm. If you talk to those that currently swim/dive or have swam/dove competitively, many if not all will say that the biggest challenge to the sport is "getting into the water". Water temperature, clarity, and sanitation are key to providing an inviting environment that some places do not prioritize, Binghamton does.

Less than 25 years ago, in our heyday, Binghamton Boys Varsity Swim & Dive were New York State champions with close to 20+ athletes on the team. This past season, 2023 - 2024, we had fourteen athletes, an increase of 12% from the season prior, 2022 - 2023. Our aspirations are to rise back to compete with the top. Thirty percent of our Varsity Swim & Dive athletes are lifeguards and were equipped with the necessary skills to do so by being a part of this team and now work for the Binghamton Parks & Recreation Department helping the department to raise future swimmers, divers, lifeguards, and future citizens.



**How To Reserve BCSD Facilities**

Did you know that many of our facilities are available to reserve by community organizations? Each month, groups from both within and outside the district use our spaces for events, meetings, and more.

Space reservations are requested and approved through Master Library. In order to book a reservation, users must first be approved by Central Office. [To register](#), You must fill out your group's information and agreements, along with proof of non-profit status if applicable. Outside groups must also upload a valid certificate of insurance.

Once you are approved by Central Office, you will be able to select a date and put in a request to reserve a space on the Master Library website. Requests must be made on this website, as there is no offline request submittal option. Facilities that are available to reserve include our classrooms, gymnasiums, theaters, and more. Use of athletic facilities are approved by the district athletic office. All other requests are approved by Central Office.

When making a reservation, please make the reservation at least two week in advance of the event to allow time for approval, and make sure contact information is correct and up to date.

[Click here](#) to learn more about facilities requests and how to create a user account on Master Library.

***If you have any other questions about our facilities or how to reserve them, please contact Phyllis Castner at (607)762-6055.***



**pr@binghamtonschoools.org**

Help us get the good news out! Email BCSD news, photos and story ideas.

Contact