

B TODAY

Binghamton City School District

Winter/Spring 2026

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#B Patriot Proud

BELIEVE



BELONG



BECOME

“
With spring ahead,
our students are
ready to take on
new opportunities
and challenges.”

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Tonia Thompson

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Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Tonia Thompson

Writing-Editing-Layout-Design

Broome-Tioga BOCES
Office of Communications & Public Relations



Binghamton City School District
164 Hawley Street, P.O. Box 2126
Binghamton, NY 13902-2126

A letter from



**Superintendent
Tonia Thompson**

Dear Binghamton Families,

As spring arrives in Binghamton, Patriot Pride continues to shine across our district. In every school and classroom, our students are putting their best foot forward and truly Performing Like a Patriot in all they do. This issue of BToday highlights just a few of the many moments that make our schools such special places to learn, grow, and succeed.

Inside, you'll read about staff members selected to join a distinguished cohort of educators from across New York State. You'll also see how a group of middle school students, alongside their teacher, showed that even a little loose change can add up to make a big difference. We'll take you inside one of the most popular stops on the Binghamton High School campus, highlight how our schools honored the legacy and contributions of Black Americans during Black History Month and reconnect you with a Binghamton alum who is now setting records in their profession.

You'll also find plenty of photos from our winter concert season, along with recognition of student musicians who were named among the best in the county. This issue features highlights from the Binghamton High School musical and East Middle School's dance performance, as well as winter athletics galleries you can explore using the QR codes throughout the magazine. Be sure to see which Patriots brought home championships and honors this season.

It's been a busy few months, and there's no slowing down. With spring ahead, our students are ready to take on new opportunities and challenges. We look forward to sharing more of their accomplishments with you in the months to come. For now, enjoy this issue of BToday.

With Patriot Pride,

Dr. Tonia Thompson

Superintendent of Schools

Four Binghamton staff members named “Masters”

Four Binghamton City School District staff members have earned the distinction of being named “Master” educators by New York State. Jessica Nevins (Binghamton High School), Ann Marie Spence (Woodrow Wilson), and Carolyn Wilczynski (Binghamton High School) were named as Master Teachers, while Andrea Kramarczyk (Binghamton High School) was named as Master Counselor.

Master Teachers and Counselors are part of a statewide network of outstanding K-12 educators. They support K-12 students in Science, Technology, Engineers, Arts/Agriculture, and Math (STEAM) learning, helping to develop future careers in the process. Working together, they help enhance education throughout New York, strengthening student engagement and performance as well as promoting the professions of teaching and school counseling.

The four Binghamton selections were the most by any District in the Southern Tier this year. In total, 177 Master Teachers and Counselors were selected by New York State, joining a network of more than 1,700 Masters throughout the state.

Congratulations to our new Master Teachers and Counselor!



Andrea Kramarczyk



Jessica Nevins



Ann Marie Spence



Carolyn Wilczynski



Students celebrate being 100 days smarter!

A BIG number is a BIG deal! Our younger elementary students and their staff members celebrated the 100th day of school with activities and games that allowed them to demonstrate their understanding of the number 100, and their ability to count to it. They wrote about what they'd buy with \$100, what they might do by the time they're 100 years old, and even made a snack mix with 100 various treats!



CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH THROUGHOUT BCSD

Black History is American History – and Binghamton History, too! All ten of our schools celebrated Black History Month during February. Students participated in engaging lessons, hands-on projects, read books by and about prominent Black Americans, and several guest speakers visited schools to share inspiring stories.

Binghamton's middle schools brought Black History Month to life by creating school-wide museums. Hallways at East and West Middle Schools were decorated with posters, photos, and artwork spotlighting historic Black civil rights activists, artists, athletes and local trailblazers.

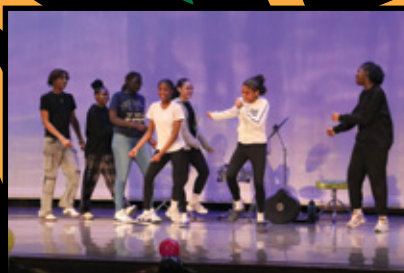
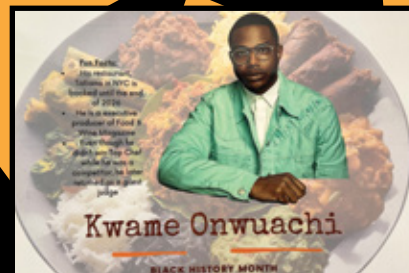
At East Middle School, students gathered for their annual Black History Month assembly. Guests included Undersheriff Sam Davis, Binghamton University Associate Dean Sharon Bryant and the band Haitian Epis, which featured West Middle School science teacher Kimzer Jean-Baptiste, and Thomas Jefferson Elementary aide Shakema Max.

The guests taught students about Binghamton's role in the Underground Railroad, inspired them with stories of Black trailblazers and demonstrated Haitian music and Creole phrases.

Bryant dove into the local history for the students, explaining the different stops and people behind the markers of the Downtown Binghamton Freedom Trail.

“Binghamton had a really progressive time in which people from all walks of life, and all races, ethnicities and cultures – they really came together to support enslaved people,” said Bryant.

At West Middle School, National Junior Honor Society students led some of our community partners on a tour through the Black History Month exhibits, telling the guests about the figures and events that shaped civil rights and Black representation like the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the sit-ins.



Patriots at the Parade



Irish and Patriot eyes were smiling at this year's Binghamton St. Patrick's Day parade. Thousands of people lined Court and Main Streets for the annual event, which was led by two proud Patriots. Binghamton High School senior Mikayla Walsh served as the Maid of Erin, the event's youth leader; the second-straight year in which a Binghamton student was selected for that role. And it was a Binghamton alum who got the parade underway – Binghamton Police Investigator John Eggleston (BHS '04) was the parade's official starter this year. Sláinte to our two Patriots!

B EYE ON ALUMNI:

Liz (Woidt) Flynn, 2009

The stands were packed at the Jan. 15th Binghamton University women's basketball game. In fact, when all the tickets were counted – 4,671 of them – it was a new attendance record for women's basketball at the university.

"It was the best," said Liz Flynn. "I love having this place filled with kids, I think it's an awesome opportunity for them."

This was the third Youth in Education Day at the Events Center which welcomes students from area schools, including a few hundred from the Binghamton City School District. Liz (Woidt) Flynn is the Associate Athletic Director for Community Engagement & Marketing for Binghamton University's Athletics Department and the brains behind the annual game designed to introduce younger fans to Bearcats athletics.

"Yes, it's a fun day, but it's also about getting kids from our community on to a college campus and showing them that if you work hard in school, you can go to college, get an education and play your sport or be involved in the dozens of clubs and activities we have," Flynn said.

Flynn graduated from Binghamton High School in 2009 where she lettered in softball and swim. She credits her coaches in those sports, Dale Cook and Bill Meade, with creating a mindset that has helped her along in her career.

"They always held us to a high standard and always wanted us to expect more out of ourselves," said Flynn. "They pushed me to want to do more and be better and continue to grow in everything I did."

After graduation, she attended Farleigh Dickinson University where she played softball for the Knights. She earned undergraduate and graduate degrees in Sports Administration from FDU. Out of college, Flynn worked at the University of North Carolina Wilmington and Arkansas State University before getting an opportunity to return home.

"One thing I noticed was that wherever I moved, the first thing I did was find the local parks, so I had a passion for this," Flynn said. "So I moved home in 2018 to run the Broome County Parks Department. It was a great opportunity to be able to run such an awesome department."

During her nearly five years as Director of Parks, Flynn managed all Parks staff and oversaw upgrades throughout Broome County's nine public parks, including two of the biggest redevelopment projects in decades. With Flynn at the helm and the support of the County Executive and Legislature, four brand-new turf fields with lights were installed at what is now known as Greenlight Networks Grand Slam Park (formerly BAGSAI). Additionally, Flynn was crucial to the early stages of a facelift at Grippen Park in West Endicott.

"For so many years, the parks hadn't been touched," Flynn said. "To be able to help secure funding and get new equipment and bring the parks up to date and create a plan for the future, that was really rewarding."

Her leadership at the County got her noticed and led to a new job with Binghamton University in 2023. One of her first orders of business was to create a special event for kids and Youth in Education Day at the Events Center was born.

"Some of these kids might never set foot on a college campus, so it helps expose them to it, light that spark, have them see role models they can look up to and aspire to be," Flynn said.

As a student at Binghamton High School nearly 20 years ago, Flynn said she never would have imagined being in the position she now holds. She says it's those lessons that her coaches at BHS taught her that helped her make it to a record-setting role at Binghamton University. Advice that she now shares with current Binghamton Patriots.

"Whatever your current job is, your current position, always go above and beyond in that role and it's going to open countless doors moving forward," said Flynn. "So, don't just do what you have to do, look and see how you can do more."



Binghamton students collect **coins** for **kindness**

Pants pockets, the car's cup holder, or even from between the couch cushions – regardless of where it came from, loose change is helping students at West Middle be the change they want to see in the world. The effort is called “Coins for Kindness” and is meant to help families of children with cancer.

“It is easy because you don’t have to bring in dollars or a certain amount, you can just bring in any coins that you find in your house,” said WMS 8th grader Grayson Kollar. “No matter what you bring, you can help.”

This is the 4th year of Coins for Kindness, an initiative started by West Middle School teacher Tara Busch and her family through their non-profit Super Cooper Saves the Day. It’s all in memory of her four-year-old son, Cooper, who passed away in 2018 after a courageous battle with leukemia.

Throughout February – the Month of Kindness – donations are made by dropping whatever you can spare into the small buckets scattered throughout 28 schools in Broome County. When all the buckets are collected, the money helps purchase meals for families spending time with their children in the hospital.

“Hospitals provide a meal for the patient, but not for the family,” Busch said. “So, any time meal time comes, you have to leave the room, even if you’re just going to the hospital cafeteria or a nearby restaurant, you have to leave. Our meals are delivered right to the room.”

Tara Busch brought the idea to her students at West Middle School; without hesitation they jumped at the opportunity to help lead the effort. Over its first three years, the initiative has raised approximately \$26,000 across the 28 schools in which buckets are placed. At the conclusion of this year’s coin drive, Busch and her students expect to add another \$10,000 collected from all the schools to that total.

“It’s a nice thing to do because you never really know what someone is going through,” said WMS 8th grade student Ariana Yurka. “You feel like you make a difference, like a little can go a long way.”

Meals purchased with the funds will go to families with children receiving care at Golisano Children’s Hospital in Syracuse. More than 300 meals have been donated to date, showing that a few cents can add up to a big difference.



BELIEVE

Inside the Most Popular Spot on BHS Campus: the PALace Café

When the morning bell rings at Binghamton High School, students and faculty make a quick stop to get some fuel to start their day. Emphasis on “quick.” By the time the next bell rings to start first period, the majority of the 20 - 30 patrons that just stopped in are already off to class. Some with coffee (hot or iced), some with bagels; even beef patties are on the menu at 8 a.m. This is the scene each morning at the PALace Café, run entirely by students from the BHS Preparation for Adult Living Success (PALS) class, a special education program offered by the Binghamton City School District.

“We’re teaching our students life skills and preparing them for employment,” said PALS teacher Danielle Guccia. “This is an excellent way to teach entry-level skills and responsibilities.”

If you need an iced coffee, Elijah Struble is the person you want to talk to. He and one other classmate prepare those beverages: get the cup ready, fill it with ice, pour the coffee, and top it with whipped cream and a chocolate or caramel drizzle if you’d like. Elijah has worked just about every job in the PALace Café since he started at Binghamton High School and has gotten a lot more comfortable since he began.

“When I was a sophomore it was a lot tougher, but now I can handle it,” Struble said. “I just like being with the crew and connecting with all the people,” he added.

The café is open during first and second periods. After their shift at the PALace, many of the older students go into the community for vocational training. Students volunteer at a

variety of businesses - auto detailing, animal shelter, retail stores to name a few - and work with a job coach who helps teach the skills they’ll need when they enter the workforce full-time.

“The community opens their doors to let our students gain valuable experience,” said PALS teacher Danielle Mahakian. “The bosses treat them with respect and train them as they would any other employee. Our students love the experience and learn hands-on training and skills that can’t be taught in the classroom.”

Through their work at the café, and out in the community, students are also learning a lot of non-tangible skills they’ll need in the “real world.” Showing up on-time, following a schedule, working as a team, completing assigned tasks, and understanding workplace expectations are all a huge part of the experience.

“Students are building confidence and self-esteem and they begin to see themselves as capable workers and contributing members of the community,” Guccia said. “They gain independence and self-advocacy skills and begin to understand their strengths, preferences, and areas for growth - all of which help them make informed decisions about their future goals.”

The PALS program is always seeking new businesses to collaborate with. If you’re interested, contact “The Danielles,” gucciad@binghamtonschoools.org or mahakiand@binghamtonschoools.org.



Performing like Patriots:

Students share talents at BCMEA Festival

The Binghamton City School District's music program was well-represented at the annual Broome County Music Educators Association's (BCMEA) festival. More than 60 students representing all ten Binghamton schools performed at the festival which brings the top student-musicians in the County together as part of a celebration of Music in Our Schools Month. BCSD was also represented by a staff member at this year's festival when MacArthur & West Middle Orchestra teacher Laura Hine served as conductor for the BCMEA 5th & 6th Grade orchestra.

Students performed at the Binghamton University Anderson Center with peers from across Broome County. To earn a selection to the BCMEA festival, student-musicians had to audition on various music scales and excerpts. Congratulations to our Binghamton Music students for their selection to the BCMEA Festival. Scan the QR code below for a full list of students who were chosen this year.

The Binghamton student-musicians who performed at BCMEA are under the direction of Bob Crissman (Horace Mann and Thomas Jefferson), Jennifer Easley (Binghamton High School), Ruth Fisher (Thomas Jefferson), Andrew Garrett (Benjamin Franklin and Theodore Roosevelt), Laura Hine (MacArthur and West Middle), Dana Ingerson (Woodrow Wilson), Beth Kovach (Binghamton High School), Debi Luker (East Middle), Olivia Hutchings (East Middle), Christine Ryder (East and West Middle), Beth Shanfelt (Calvin Coolidge and MacArthur), Joel Smales (Binghamton High School), Wendi Stetson (MacArthur), and Melanie Valencia (West Middle).

Binghamton students make voyage to state finals at Odyssey of the Mind

Binghamton Schools once again made a voyage to the state finals for Odyssey of the Mind.

Two teams from Binghamton High School, a team from Horace Mann Elementary and a team from Calvin Coolidge Elementary qualified for the state tournament after successful regional performances.

"When they faced the unexpected, they didn't fall apart — instead they stood taller," said Annette Nestruck, coach of the Calvin Coolidge team and reading interventionist at the elementary school.

"They carried each other, covered for each other, and proved that real teamwork shines brightest in hard moments. I couldn't be prouder."

At the Region 12 tournament at Broome-Tioga BOCES on Feb. 21, Horace Mann & Calvin Coolidge placed second and third respectively in "Taller Tales of John Jivery" for Division I.

The BHS teams placed second and third respectively in the same problem for Division III.

In this problem, teams create and present a humorous performance about an original tall tale. The tale must include a team-created hero or heroine who performs an incredible feat, a unique explanation of how something began or came to be, and a surprise for the audience. Each event must be accompanied by a visual weather effect representing an emotion.

"Odyssey of the Mind is a great opportunity for our students to showcase their creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving skills," said Horace Mann coach and TK teacher Jamie Garrett.

"This group of 5th grade students work so well together: they encourage one another, understand the strengths of each team member, and build off each other's ideas. As a coach, it has been amazing to watch their confidence grow over two years. I am excited to see what they can do at the state competition!"





COOLIDGE



FRANKLIN

ELEMENTARY WINTER CONCERTS



JEFFERSON



MACARTHUR



MANN



ROOSEVELT



WILSON

Scan the QR codes to see the full albums



WMS



EMS



MIDDLE SCHOOL WINTER CONCERTS



EMS DANCE



BELIEVE



BHS VOCAL

BHS WINTER CONCERTS



BHS BAND

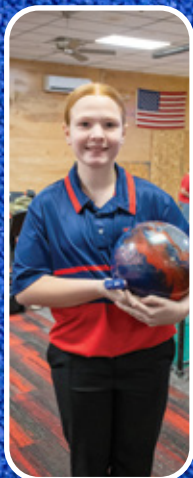
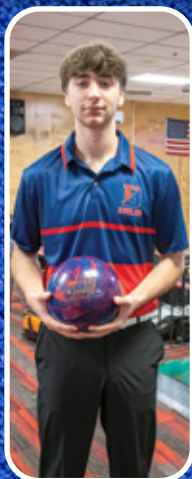
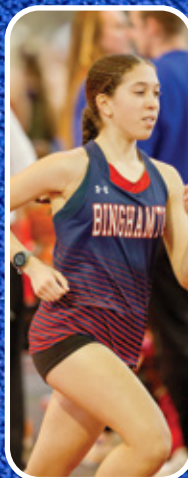


BHS ORCHESTRA

Scan the QR codes to see the full albums

Milo Wilson Finishes 3rd at State Indoor Track & Field Championships

The bar is set high – literally – for Binghamton senior Milo Wilson. The high jumper finished third at the NYSPHSAA Indoor Track & Field Championships. Wilson spent the season ranked second in the state and 10th nationally in the event before winning Section IV to qualify for states. He tied his own Binghamton High School record with a jump of six-feet, ten inches at the championship which was held on March 7th on Staten Island.



Three More Patriots Compete at State Finals

Wilson wasn't the only Binghamton athlete to shine at states this year. Eva DiNunzio Welch captured a Section IV title in the Indoor Track 1000m, finishing the event at 3:06.47 and qualifying for the March 7th state tournament. Over on the lanes, two Binghamton bowlers returned to the state championship for the second year in a row. Dom Bernthon and Haley Peters represented the Patriots at the state finals on March 14th. Both bowlers were also selected to the Southern Tier Athletic Conference all-conference team.



Boys & Girls Basketball Take STAC Crown

Title Town times two! Both Binghamton junior varsity basketball teams captured the Southern Tier Athletic Conference crown on Feb. 24th. The girls defended their home court at BHS, beating Waverly 44-36. The boys got the job done on the road, traveling to Ithaca where the Patriots topped the Little Red 77-64. Congrats to our champions!



Binghamton North Alum Inducted to Section IV Hall of Fame

A Binghamton athletics legend has been enshrined in the Section IV Hall of Fame. Clarence "Bucky" McGill, a 1967 graduate of Binghamton North High School, was selected for the Section's Class of 2026. McGill was a stand-out football player for North and went on to play for Syracuse University. He was also one of the "Syracuse 8," a group of players that sat out the 1970 football season in protest of discrimination and inequity within the SU Athletics program. While changes were not immediate, the Syracuse 8 is credited with spurring the university to create a more equitable athletics program.

BOWLING



BASKETBALL/CHEER



SENIOR NIGHT

WRESTLING



INDOOR TRACK



Scan the QR codes to see the full albums

BOYS SWIMMING



GIRLS BASKETBALL

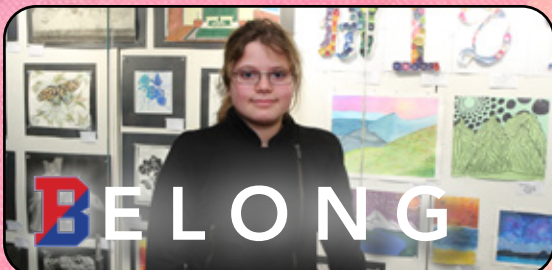




DISTRICT ART SHOW

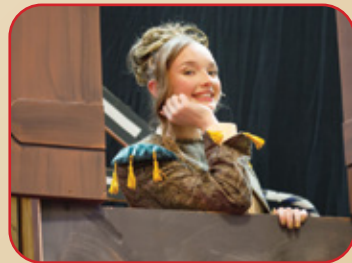


Scan the QR code to see the full album



BE LONG

The Rod Serling School of Fine Arts
at Binghamton High School presents



Scan the QR code to see the full album



BECOME



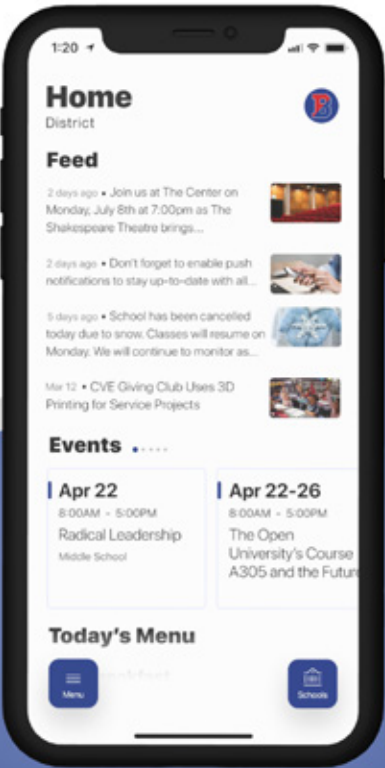
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