

Bett® Pride

Bettendorf Community School District Community Newsletter

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**Bettendorf Community
School District**

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Here's to a Great Year Ahead!

Welcome Back Bulldogs!

There is great excitement as students and staff return to school and kick off a new year of learning, growth, and connection. Hallways are filled with smiling faces, classroom conversations, and the energy of new beginnings. We look forward to a fantastic school year filled with opportunities for every student to learn, achieve, and thrive. Welcome back, Bulldogs!





John W. Elkin
Interim Superintendent

There is something special about the start of a new school year.

Our buildings are once again filled with the energy of students, the dedication of our staff, and the excitement that comes with new opportunities.

We recently celebrated Homecoming, which is about so much more than a game or a week of festivities. It's a celebration of our shared history, a time to welcome back generations of alumni, and a powerful reminder of the traditions and connections that bring us together as a Bettendorf community.

For me, this school year is deeply meaningful. Serving as Interim Superintendent for the district that helped shape me as a student is a privilege. Returning to lead in a place that is truly special—to countless others as well as myself—is both an incredible honor and a responsibility I take very seriously.

Superintendent's Message

Tradition as Our Foundation, Student Success as Our Future



Interim Superintendent Elkin joined BHS students as they helped fellow students register to vote, providing a great opportunity for students to learn about civic engagement and make their voices heard.

Over the past several weeks, I have had the opportunity to connect with students, staff, families, and community members. I have been reminded again and again of what makes our district so exceptional: talented and caring educators, outstanding opportunities for students, supportive families, strong community partnerships, and a deep sense of pride in our schools.

As we begin the 2026–27 school year, my focus is on listening, learning, building relationships, and working together. Our students are at the center of everything we do, and their success depends on the collective efforts of our entire community. The unified focus of our leadership team is simple: put students first by grounding our work in three core principles—a healthy culture, active collaboration, and system alignment.

I am excited about what lies ahead. We will celebrate our successes, address challenges together, and continue looking for ways to make our district an even stronger place to learn, work, and grow. The goal is simple: to be the district of choice for the families and staff who call Bettendorf home, as well as those looking to make it theirs.

Thank you to our staff for the tremendous work that went into preparing for the new school year, to our families for entrusting us with your children, and to our community for its continued support of our schools.

Go Bulldogs!

John W. Elkin
Interim Superintendent
Bettendorf Community School District



One-Cent Sales Tax (SAVE) Improving Our Schools! **Bettendorf Middle School Celebrates Completion of Phase 1**

Recently, BMS celebrated an exciting milestone in the Bettendorf Middle School Renovation Project with the opening of the new classroom addition and the completion of its first phase.

The approximately 12,000-square-foot addition features 12 new classrooms designed to support collaborative, flexible learning. The addition also includes a storm shelter designed to accommodate up to 1,300 people, further enhancing safety for our students and staff.

This milestone marks the completion of Phase 1 of the district's five-phase, 2025–30 renovation project at Bettendorf Middle School.

The overall project represents an estimated \$33.7 million investment in Bettendorf Middle School's future. Over five phases, the school will expand and modernize with collaborative learning spaces, flexible classrooms, improved circulation and natural light, enhanced safety and accessibility, and energy-efficient building systems.

Thank you to our project partners, Russell Construction and Bray Architects, and to the many skilled tradespeople, journeymen, and construction support staff whose hard work and expertise are helping bring this exciting transformation to life.



Safe, Connected and BETter Together: Our Safety Partnerships

As we begin a new school year, we remain committed to creating safe, connected, and supportive schools. Some of our most important safety work happens long before an emergency—through relationships, trust, prevention, and strong partnerships.

Our School Resource Officers (SROs) are an important part of that work. While they are sworn law enforcement professionals, their role extends beyond emergency response. SROs are visible members of our school communities, connecting with students and families, supporting staff, participating in safety planning, and building relationships. We want students to know our SROs before they ever need them and recognize them as trusted adults who are ready to listen and help.

SROs are part of a larger student-support and safety team that includes teachers, counselors, school psychologists, social workers, administrators, families, and community providers. This prevention-focused approach is also reflected in our Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) work, which helps create positive, predictable, and safe learning environments. Our goal is to understand what each student needs and bring together the right people and supports.

We are also fortunate to have long-standing partnerships with the Bettendorf Police Department, Bettendorf Fire Department, and EMS. We train, communicate, and participate in safety exercises together so our teams know one another and understand their roles before an emergency occurs.



Officer Payton visits with a Bettendorf Middle School student during passing time, building connections as part of the district's School Resource Officer partnership.

School safety is a team effort. It can be a conversation in a hallway, a student asking for help, a teacher noticing a change, a family reaching out, an SRO building a relationship, or community partners preparing side by side.

Connection. Partnership. Prevention. Preparedness.

Together, these efforts help every student feel known, valued, supported, and safe—making Bettendorf schools safer, stronger, and BETter Together

Notice of Nondiscrimination

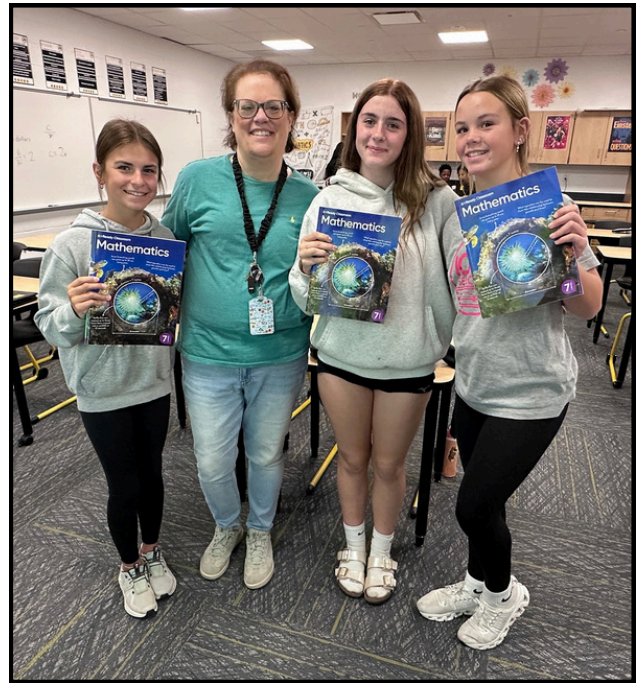
It is the policy of the Bettendorf Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices.

There is a grievance procedure for processing discrimination complaints. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact the Affirmative Action Coordinator (Executive Director of Human Resources), District Administration Center, 3311 18th St., Bettendorf, IA 52722, (563) 359-3681.

New Math Curriculum and Upcoming Curriculum Adoptions

Bettendorf Middle School is in its first year of implementing iReady Classroom Mathematics in grades 6-8 general math and 6th/7th grade Honors Math. Last school year, a committee spent months evaluating three curriculums and reached consensus that iReady would best meet the needs of our students and staff.

Math teachers engaged in professional learning on the new curriculum both at the end of the 2025-26 school year and the start of this year. Throughout the 2026-27 school year, the team will continue to collaborate, participate in additional professional development, and monitor student data to ensure the curriculum is meeting student needs.



Bettendorf Middle School math teacher Melissa Bixby and students check out one of the new math textbooks being used this school year as part of the district's new curriculum adoption.

Looking Ahead: Elementary Math and Middle School Social Studies

This school year, the district will also evaluate high-quality instructional curriculums for Elementary Mathematics and Middle School Social Studies, with adoption planned for the 2027-28 school year in accordance with board policy.

Both processes will follow the same model used in our last three curriculum adoptions. Each level will form a committee of teacher representatives tasked with evaluating curriculums brought forward for consideration. A smaller team will first attend vendor presentations to identify which curriculums are viable options, then

narrow the field before handing those choices to the full committee.

Committees will use a structured evaluation tool to assess each curriculum from multiple angles, including alignment with the Iowa Academic Standards. This work begins this fall for both content areas, with the goal of presenting a recommended curriculum to Interim Superintendent Elkin and the Board of Education in the spring.

This is an exciting process that gives teachers the opportunity to shape what our students learn and how they learn it. It's also demanding work—the teachers on these committees are putting in extra time after school throughout the year to thoroughly evaluate and discuss each option, all in pursuit of finding the best fit for our district and, most importantly, our students.

SCRA Grant: School Emergency Communication System Upgrade

The safety and well-being of our students and educators are our district's absolute priority.

Thanks to a generous \$57,288.47 grant from the Scott County Regional Authority (SCRA), the district has successfully addressed a critical vulnerability in its safety infrastructure by upgrading its emergency communication network.

Before this upgrade, our primary communication method for support staff was compromised by obsolete, ten-year-old radio equipment. Staff frequently dealt with batteries that could not hold a charge and weak signal strength that created "dead zones" in hallways, offices, and classrooms.

With the SCRA funding, the district partnered with local vendor Electronic Engineering to procure and deploy 42 state-of-the-art Motorola XPR 3500e two-way radios.

These high-powered radios have been strategically distributed to key personnel, such as principals, administrators, secretaries, and paraprofessionals, ensuring that those who support students the most have what they need to communicate effectively.

Due to this project, we now have strong signal coverage across all of our school buildings, which completely eliminates historically



The Bettendorf High School administrative team showing their two-way radios: Jennifer Wikan, Anthony Wittemeyer, Kevin Skillett, Conrad Keibler, and Kristy Cleppe.

dangerous communication "dead zones". Our staff operates with all-day battery reliability, ensuring that our primary communication devices remain fully active and ready throughout the entire school day. Most importantly, we have bolstered our emergency preparedness by integrating these radios directly into our official safety drills. Our team can now easily and effectively coordinate lockdowns, building evacuations, and medical responses, dramatically reducing response times and safeguarding our students and staff.

This project represents a permanent, highly protective safety shield for nearly 5,000 Scott County residents who learn and teach in our schools every day. The district is deeply grateful to the SCRA for its continued partnership and commitment to safeguarding our children.



**See our Schools
in Action!**



Follow our district on social media
@ BettSchools for updates, events,
and highlights.



Bett
Connect
Bettendorf High School
Alumni
Students | Staff | Community
bettconnect.com



The Lamp

The Bettendorf Community Schools Foundation works to enhance the educational opportunities for Bettendorf Community School District students through the development and distribution of funds.



President - Kevin Cullum | **Vice President** - Jill Frerichs |
Secretary - Lauren Pena Chrissotimos | **Treasurer** - Thao Chu
BCSF Board Members: Benjamin Keith & Jennifer Smith

Bettendorf Foundation Scholarships 2026

Congratulations to our scholarship awardees! We are proud to recognize these outstanding students for their hard work, dedication, and accomplishments. We wish them continued success as they take the next steps in their educational journeys.

- **Alla Family Foundation (Academic)** - Joseph Evans & Nisha Siva
- **Barbara J. Brown Golden Bulldog Award (Athletics)** - Joseph McDermott & Maggie Menster
- **BEA (Teachers Association)** - Payton Paul
- **BHS Class of 1956** - Rowan Schalk
- **BHS Legacy** - Cody Trevino & Gage Tucker
- **Bill and Alice Mary Meier** - Henry Gillies
- **Bill and Ellen Stradt** - Alivia Snow
- **Dr. A.E. Lampe Family** - Kadena Gibbs
- **Dr. Raymond W. Oles Math and Computer Sciences** - Armon Williams
- **"For a Better World"** - Marlee Behrends, Abigail Holland, Sophia Wainwright
- **Friends of Theatre** - John Rowe
- **Give Like Charly** - Emma Reilly
- **Janice Lawson Eternal Spirit (Athletics)** - Emmalee Woltz
- **Joann M. Stuhr (Math)** - Parker Pruitt
- **Judith Wade** - Natalie Everding
- **Pamela D. Johnson, Ph.D. (Educational)** - Madison Stark
- **Quinton J. Sandry Vocational Scholarship** - Milana Griffin
- **Redeemer Pathway** - Tyler Hodges & Alana Rico
- **Rich and Dee James (Citizenship)** - Audrey Seneli
- **Roberts Family Scholarship** - Jacee Cale
- **Stewart N. Lounsberry (MVP)** - Jenna Farwell & Jack Mohr
- **Thomas Jefferson Elementary Spirit of Community Legacy** - Piper Fredricksen & Keegan Widmeyer

What does the Bettendorf Schools Foundation do?

Provide Funding to Benefit Learning

The Foundation disperses funds in the form of scholarships to seniors, innovative classroom grants to teachers to supplement their curriculum, Pride grants to high school teachers to extend learning opportunities during Pride block, classroom makeovers, and HAVlife grants to students ages 10-15 to participate in the arts or athletics.

Grants have a tremendous impact on the students involved!

Learn how you can help support the work of the Bettendorf Community Schools Foundation!



BCSF thanks all who supported the Annual Labor Day Run



This amazing event raises funds for scholarships and classroom grants. Thanks to all the sponsors, volunteers, runners, students, families, and participants who contributed to the success of this major fundraiser.



**Bettendorf Community
School District**

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