



RACE *for* EDUCATION



Race & Serve for Education takes place each year in the winter. It is one of our major fundraisers and God has truly blessed BMS by the generosity of our donors through this event! Elementary students take part in a jog-a-thon and the middle and high school students take part in volunteer service in our local community. Be on the lookout for letters inviting you to sponsor our students for the Race & Serve for Education fundraiser.



Friday, March 15
5:00-7:00 PM

The school will be alive with the 8th grade Living History Museum, school tours and open classrooms. Open House is a great opportunity to meet our teachers, see the school and learn what BMS has to offer! Check our website for more details.

www.bmsprek12.org



The annual excursion for 5th grade students to Black Rock Retreat for Outdoor School was filled with adventure, exploration, and hands-on learning!

Save the Date

› **Open House & Living Museum**
March 15, 2024

› **Middle & High School Play**
April 19 & 20, 2024

› **Spring Concert**
May 16, 2024,
1:00 pm and 6:30 pm

› **BMS Annual Auction**
May 25 & 26, 2024

Events Recap

He was born that we may have LIFE!



Elementary students enjoyed their annual fall hayride under beautiful blue skies and sunshine!



One of the great benefits of a smaller school setting is our ability to individualize students' academic experience. This year, we've enjoyed watching the development and growth of a digital media class, where several students are exploring all that goes in to creating and recording digital morning announcements each week!

Festive Friday



Our preschool students and several elementary classrooms had a special visit this morning from musician Seth Crissman who brought an array of instruments to share! Seth's work as Project Director at The Soil and The Seed Project focuses on creating music, art, and "Little Liturgies" to nurture faith.



As part of their study of the Lewis and Clark expedition, Honors American History students in Mr. Farley's class had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with and shoot a .54-caliber flintlock rifle of the same design that was used during the famous 1804-06 voyage. These rifles were the most important items taken on the trip by the members of the Corps of Discovery. This point is emphasized numerous times in the book the students are currently reading, *Undaunted Courage* by Stephen Ambrose. By having this "hands-on" experience, the students gained an appreciation for these firearms' operation and effectiveness.

Second grade hosted a publishing party, complete with decorations and snacks! Students have been working on personal narratives and they are finally finished editing and putting together their final project. Special invitations were sent out to PreK students who stopped by to hear the stories and celebrate with them!



Drive Your Unconventional Vehicle to School Day

Everyone enjoyed the unique parade of vehicles as 8-12 grade students were invited to arrive at school in an unconventional manner!



Parent Reflections

Student Academics

One of our favorite things about having our children attend BMS has been the opportunity for them to customize their educational experience. When Emilee had already taken Physics by her junior year, we were not sure what science she could/should take as a senior. Fortunately, BMS was willing to work with her to develop independent studies to meet both their requirements and her interests.

Additionally, we would encourage ALL parents to consider the dual enrollment opportunities that BMS offers through online education. Both of our children were able to not only take all of the classes in which they expressed an interest, but also gain college credit in doing so!

Parent Experience

When initially considering BMS, we really thought the decision was all about what was best for our children. However, we have come to realize that our experience as “BMS parents” has been equally valuable! We were continually frustrated and worried as parents with children in public schools. Our values seemed to be not only overlooked, but often outrightly disdained. BMS not only welcomed our children with open arms but helped us find a place as well. It has truly become a whole family experience!

Financial Decisions

At first, the financial obligation



seemed overwhelming for us. We looked at the large yearly number and said, “NO WAY!” However, we forgot that God opens doors that we think are closed. A friend urged us to pray about the decision and said with great faith, “if He wants your child there, He will move mountains.” She was more right than I could have ever imagined. For not only did God move mountains to get our children to BMS, but he also moved mountains to grow our faith through the journey. Once we made the commitment to sending our children, we began to look at our finances differently.

1. We made the decision not to keep up with the Jones’. This meant that we did not drive new cars, that we only bought essential clothing, and we did not buy the latest gadgets. However, because most families at BMS were doing the same thing, we never felt pressure to do anything differently. Instead, we felt very

supported as parents by instilling Godly values of stewardship in our children. Saying no actually made not only our financial life but our parenting life easier!

2. We made the decision to involve our extended family. This could look different for each family, but for ours, it meant that grandparents took on the monthly cafeteria bill, aunt and uncle supported through fundraisers, and everyone participated in events as needed, including sports and music extras. Having the kids know that the whole family was part of their education was a blessing and a reminder that God created us for community.

3. We prayed. We prayed for our kids, their classmates, their teachers, the school, the community, music and sports and specific classes. You name it, we prayed over it. Because we knew that God can and will move mountains and sometimes, we just cannot see over the next ridge, but God surely can.

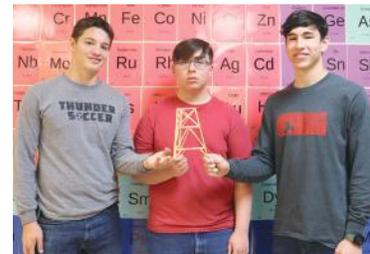
We are convinced that our children are not the only ones who received a stellar education from BMS. We would tell any parent that the question should not be, “How can I afford BMS?” but rather, “What can I change in my behavior so that I can afford BMS?” Chances are, it’s something God wants you to work on anyway! Pray and just watch the mountains move.

*-William Henson & Allison Fisher,
parents of Anney (2020) and
Emilee (2023)*

In November, elementary class are celebrating the many facets of Christian education - Math, Language Arts, History, Specials, and Bible - in a variety of fun ways!



Middle school students spent several hours at Greenwood State Park exploring nature, engaging in group activities, and enjoying the beautiful fall weather. Their afternoon included lots of laughter and ended with a time of prayer!



Physics students were recently tasked with designing and building towers out of balsa wood, competing to see whose tower could hold the most weight! The engineers put their creations to the test, adding weights until their tower was crushed, and subsequently examining where the breaks happened. The winning teams, whose towers both held 80lbs. included Quinn Renno, Drew Miriello, Aquilla Harshbarger, and Karina Renno. Well done!

Elementary students and families gave generously once again to help restock pantry items and household cleaning supplies for Lewistown Shelter Services which were delivered by students from the high school Social Issues class.



During the first day of school in December, high school students hosted activity stations for the elementary classes providing a variety of interactive Christmas fun for everyone!

High school art students had the privilege of traveling to Winchester, VA for a workshop on marbling paper and bookbinding crafts. Race for Education monies in the Art department paid for this great opportunity!

Brittani Postnikov of The Soft Asylum shared a short talk on the history of marbled papers. She then demonstrated techniques that have been used for hundreds of years, showed how to float paint on the water-like surface, and manipulate the paint with combs and other tools. Students then printed their own unique design on large pieces of paper, rinsed the excess and hung the papers to dry. After a tour of the Cat Tail Run Bookbinding, which repairs damaged books, replaces missing book parts, and creates boxes to store old books, students began creating booklets and bookmarks using their own paper. They had a great day of experiential learning and came home with some beautiful art!





American History students got to experience a tiny taste of history as Mr. Farley prepared fire cakes made of flour, water & salt. This simple "cake" was the main course for Revolutionary War soldiers at the Valley Forge encampment during the winter of 1777.



During study times in December, middle school students were invited to make Christmas cards to share with folks at Valley View Retirement Community. Christmas activities included caroling in the Activity Room at Valley View Terrace and presenting their collection of more than 100 cards to staff for distribution to residents.



Recent graduate, Emilee Fisher-Henson, returned to BMS for a few days to observe the 2nd grade classroom for her college courses in Early Childhood Education. She led the class through a Candy Cane Science Lab activity. Students were asked to hypothesize, observe, and record what happened to candy canes immersed in different liquids!

Student Accolades



Character Counts

The Character Counts program at Belleville Mennonite School recognizes elementary students for outstanding, consistent displays of character in the classroom and throughout the students' daily interactions with others. Thank you, students, for your Christ-like kindness and helpfulness!



Congratulations to our Character Counts award recipients for November: Madison Peachey, Kindergarten; Declan Peachey, 1st grade; Addie Hearn, 2nd grade; Carter Walker, 3rd grade; McKinley Zook, 4th grade; Landon Yoder, 5th grade. We are so thankful for your consistent display of self-control, hard work, and accountability!

“Pay careful attention to your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won’t need to compare yourself to anyone else. For we are each responsible for our own conduct.”
(Galatians 6:4-5)



Congratulations to our Character Counts Award Recipients for December/January: Leland Groff, Kindergarten; Kennedy Kanagy, 1st grade; Judah Groff, 2nd grade; Hayden Yoder, 3rd grade; Malachi Doggett, 4th grade; Madison Jurasz, 5th grade. Thank you each for your consistent display of trustworthiness! We appreciate your loyalty, honesty, and desire to always do the right thing. May your life always display that you belong to Christ!

Athletics

Thunder Basketball

Your 2023-24 Belleville Thunder Varsity Girls & Boys Basketball teams! We are excited to have a great group of coaches and players. Come see our teams in action this season! Home game schedule on our Facebook page and webpage.



Left to Right, front row: Ethan Renno, Evan Crossen, Dakota Gibbons, Grant Yoder, Miguel Interiano, Bryson Peachey.

Back row: Head Coach Chase Peachey, Paul Yoder, Collin Hartzler, Drew Miriello, Quinn Renno, Clay Ammon & Assistant Coach Michael Ammon.



Left to Right, front row: Elaina Peachey, Angie Weaver, Lilly Yoder, Mariah Schuble.

Back row: Assistant Coach Ally Zook, Chantal Weaver, Leah Reed, Karina Renno, Olivia Eby & Head Coach Brian Renno.



(Left) Clay Ammon goes for three. (Middle) Leah Reed goes in for a layup vs Northumberland Christian. (Right) Junior High girls get in on the action with a win over Juniata Christian! Abbi Yoder to Eleanor Druckenmiller for the layup.

District Soccer Play-offs

Congratulations Thunder on the 3-0 win over Bishop Carroll in the first round of D6 A play-offs!



Student athletes, coaches, and parents worked diligently to make 975 delicious apple pies! Thanks to the many helping hands and supportive friends throughout the community who've made this annual fundraiser for BMS Athletics another great success!



BELLEVILLE

MENNONITE SCHOOL



4105 Front Mountain Road | Belleville, PA 17004



Our annual Thanksgiving feast did not disappoint! Thank you ladies for your hard work and all the love you stir into school lunches each day!!



1st & 2nd grade students did a fantastic job coloring and creating artwork to help decorate The Square Café for the annual Festival of Ice!



Colorful - and delicious Culinary Arts creations!

Special thanks to Kish Bank for their ongoing support of BMS through the Pennsylvania EITC program! Shane Graham, Belleville branch manager, recently stopped by to present their annual contribution of \$10,000 to be used for financial scholarships. It truly is an honor to partner with local businesses and individuals who choose to use their tax liability as a tuition blessing for many families each year. Contact us to learn more about about how to creatively align tax credits with your values, or about how your family can receive valuable financial scholarships at BMS!



High school students contributed over \$695 to this year's Christmas project which focused on raising funds for Samaritan's Purse and Gifts of Hope and will provide 9 sets of baby chicks, 8 blankets, 8 copies of the Bible, 8 pairs of shoes, 8 soccer balls, 8 school uniforms, and 8 sets of school supplies for children around the world!



Our middle school Student Council members spent a day at Locust Grove Mennonite Church assisting local coordinators with packing shoeboxes for Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child. Hundreds of boxes were loaded into shipping trailers as participating groups and churches from Huntingdon, Mifflin, and Juniata Counties dropped off what they had collected to be shared around the world (and the students got to hear moving personal stories about the impact of the shoeboxes)!



Our EITC business partners like MCS Bank are a vital part of providing meaningful financial scholarships to many families each year! Peter Ort, Chief Operating Officer of MCS Bank presented this year's contribution to Nicholas Wilson, Superintendent. To learn more about this incredible opportunity for businesses and individuals to designate a portion of their tax liability to BMS for tuition scholarships, visit <https://www.bmsprek12.org/support/eitc.cfm>.

Several of our high school choir members had the opportunity to participate in the 33rd Annual Huntingdon County Chorus Festival hosted by Southern Huntingdon High School. Alivia, Deanna, Chloe, Ava, and Ellie spent two days rehearsing with students from Huntingdon, Mount Union, Juniata Valley, and Southern Huntingdon before presenting a lovely concert under the direction of guest conductor Dr. Joy Meade from Messiah University!



Surgery Day

During Surgery Day in 1st grade students learn more about how an apostrophe can replace the letter "i" and combine two words to make one!

