

BERNE - KNOX - WESTERLO

BKW

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

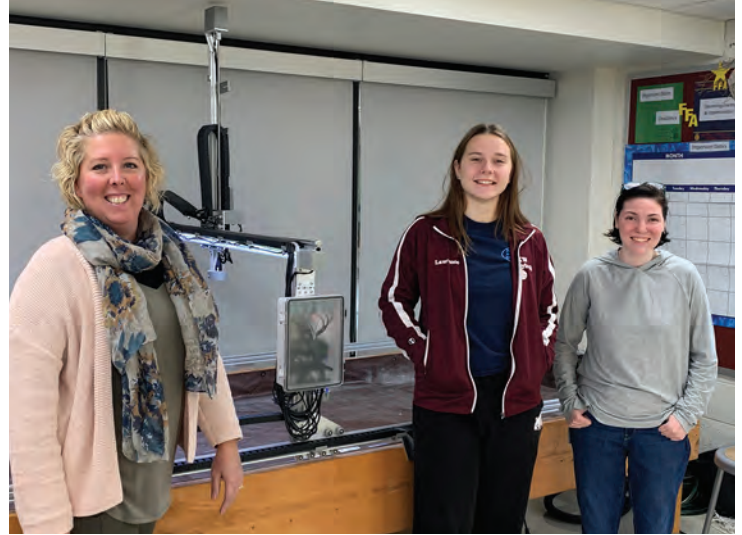
FFA FarmBot: Changing today's classroom for tomorrow

Could you ever imagine experiencing learning from a robot to gain knowledge in a classroom? Today, current BKW students in the Future Farmers of America (FFA) program are doing just that! Built and introduced during the 2020-21 school year, the FarmBot is assisting students with learning about the basic principles of science, identifying important solutions for soil, all while identifying ways to improve today's approach to agriculture. The newly installed FarmBot is currently in use in the BKW Secondary School and students are taking a first-hand approach

to learning. It is the only FarmBot currently in use in an Albany County FFA classroom. The best part? The technology was secured by a federal grant at no cost to district taxpayers.

According to the Farmbot website, over 500 educational institutions have integrated FarmBot into their curriculum. The technology allows for today's students to learn how to become engaged with research, experimentation, while gaining an immediate connection to their curriculum.

"Technology continues to play an important role in our



BKW Agriscience Teacher & FFA Advisor Michaela Kehrer showcases the FarmBot technology with BKW students Mackenzie Lawrence and Charlotte McFadden (pictured from left to right).

curriculum and especially within our students' everyday lives," said BKW Agriscience Teacher & FFA Advisor

Michaela Kehrer. "Imagine the possibilities our students have by gaining access to

(FFA FarmBot continued on page 2)

Esports: Changing the learning landscape at BKW

As technology shifts and more opportunities become available to students, BKW is continuing to stay ahead of career priorities for its students. Meet the Esports classroom directed by Technology Teacher William Dergosits. In this exciting classroom setting, students are able to dive into an electronic wonderland complete with an emphasis on obtaining skill sets in coding, electronics and web development. Created in 2021, the class has now evolved into an excellent addition to the school's curriculum.

"Staying engaged with students is critically important for this generation of learners," said Dergosits. "The Esports classroom hits all of the areas we look to identify with BKW students. By mixing in technology, education and career opportunities – we are bringing something new to the table. We are excited to develop



BLW Elementary students getting a hands-on view of their recent classroom project!

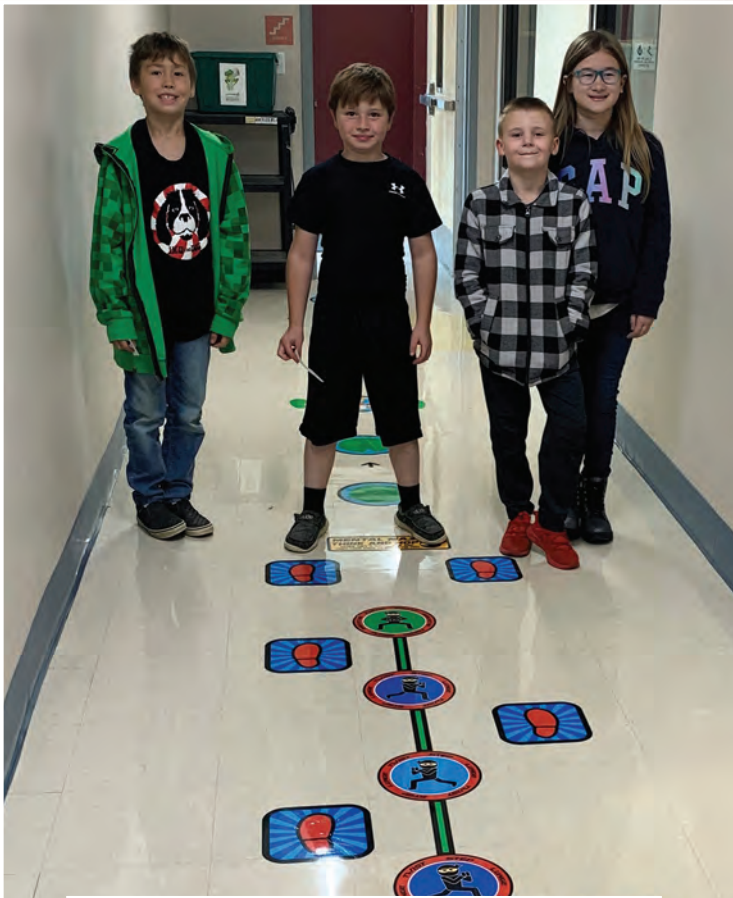
(Esports continued on page 4)



CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Around Our Campus: New Spaces and Faces

For the 2022-23 school year, the district has added some new faculty and staff to our team! Plus, we are continuing to introduce spaces and areas to our school campus to deliver a welcoming and inviting educational environment. See how our campus is changing for today's learning priorities!



(FFA FarmBot continued from page 1)

their learning tool and how it can positively impact our FFA program moving forward. We are fortunate to have hands-on learning within our FFA program and we continue to find new ways to integrate it in today's classroom."

During the course of the school year, students are understanding the next generation of farming techniques and charting ways to evolve agriculture for tomorrow's communities. Stay tuned as we continue to share how this important research pushes our students to become better farmers and students.



CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

BKW appoints College and Career Readiness coordinator

On Monday, September 26, the Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District Board of Education approved the appointment of Mr. Mark Tidd to the position of College Career Readiness coordinator. In his new role, Mr. Tidd will work to prepare students for success in college or future career paths through internship support and career exploration.

“At BKW, we continue a strong commitment in allowing our students to achieve their educational and career goals,” said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Mundell. “We are excited to add Mr. Tidd to the role of College Career Readiness coordinator, while continuing to build our ability to assist and celebrate the achievements of our secondary students.”

Mr. Tidd has been a teacher in the BKW district for nearly 16 years, having taught second, fifth and sixth grade classrooms.

To celebrate this important recognition, we are sharing an in-depth Q&A with Mr. Tidd on his thoughts on being named the College Career Readiness coordinator, while understanding his goals and preparation for today’s students:

How will this new role impact your outreach with BKW students?

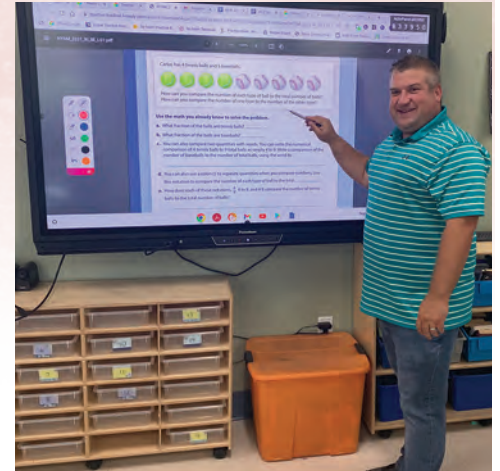
Having taught 2nd, 5th and most recently, 6th grade has allowed me the

opportunity to watch our students grow from their youngest years, to adolescence/early adulthood. I believe that by educating our students at all grade levels about the many pathways to graduation and beyond, we can have an immediate impact on their success. The design of our district campus and the

close proximity of the elementary and middle/ high school will allow for collaboration between buildings, while reaching out to former BKW students will help to highlight the many opportunities for post-graduate plans.

As a College Career Readiness Coordinator, what mindset do you take into the position to improve opportunities for BKW High School students?

I trust that there is a pathway to success for everyone. What is the right path for one, may not be the best option for others. By collaborating with my colleagues and meeting with students, a priority is to educate our secondary learners on all of their choices post-graduation; allowing them the opportunity to explore options of which they might not be aware. I also hope to foster a sense of self-efficacy amongst the students, encouraging them to keep an open mind while considering their plans after high school.



Mr. Mark Tidd was recently appointed to the position of College Career Readiness coordinator at BKW.

How can this role highlight the district’s “They are because we are,” commitment to the BKW community?

Adults can be influential in the lives of students, as students can be influential in the lives of adults. Likewise, students have the ability to impact their peers. We have a wonderful community of current students along with alumni that have had incredible accomplishments and have found success. By learning about the experiences of others, the students will have a better sense of what might be the best individualized plan for them upon graduation.

BKW to launch alumni web-based news series

Beginning this year, the Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District will introduce a new web series to feature district alumni. The featured series will offer in-depth Q&A, storytelling and article features to keep you up-to-date on past students. From professional and personal successes to special achievements and leadership recognition, we’ll bring the news to you!

It’s with your trust that we will be able to collect and tell the story of our alumni for our BKW community. Our district continues

to play a significant role in shaping the next generation of civic leaders, coaches and mentors, business owners, and citizens that will keep our community moving forward.

If you know of a former student(s) who are accomplishing great things academically, professionally or is making an impact in the community – we want to know! Please submit or nominate an alum or share your ideas and suggestions to the Communications Office at communications@bkwschools.org.

**2022-23
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CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

BKW Elementary to launch 'Start with Hello' campaign

Beginning this fall, BKW Elementary staff and students will begin participating in a nationwide program supported by the Sandy Hook Promise Foundation. The program, called 'Start with Hello,' encourages students to learn basic opportunities to engage one another by saying "hello" to a fellow student as a way to possibly start a friendship, or better yet, to let someone know a classmate is there to listen. The program is part of a student outreach program developed by the Sandy Hook Promise Foundation, which is a national nonprofit organization founded and led by several family members whose loved ones were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 14, 2012.

"Simple acts of kindness can create an immediate change in the day of a student," said Berne-Knox-Westerlo Elementary School Principal Mrs. Landry. "In what might feel like a small gesture to some, can make someone else's day that much better. With this program, we are



Elementary students reading and engaging with their fellow students as part of the 'Start with Hello' program on the school campus.

able to work with our younger students to better understand this type of outreach and enable them to create opportunities to reach out if they feel someone needs it. We are excited to see its effects throughout our school year and beyond."

A similar version of the program will be introduced at the secondary level during the school year. Continue to follow the conversation by visiting our district website at <https://www.bkwschools.org> or follow us on Facebook!

(Esports continued from page 1)

this conversation on our campus."

The current program is more than just video gaming, it also falls perfectly into STEM (Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) development for students. To put its importance into perspective, The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that STEM occupations will grow by 8.0% between 2018-2029, compared with 3.7% for non-STEM jobs. That is not a huge leap, but is progressively foreshadowing the importance of STEM and its role in supporting academic success inside the classroom.

"By listening to our community and understanding our students' needs, we are continuing to deliver a forward-thinking curriculum that prepares students for the future," said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Timothy Mundell. Our students are becoming engaged with their course work and having fun exploring new and exciting employment opportunities."