



KALKASKA BLAZER BULLETIN

September 2024
Vol. IV | No. 1
#GoBlazers

WELCOME TO BLAZER COUNTRY!



KHS Named a “Best High School”

Kalkaska High School is on the RISE! KHS has been awarded the “BEST High Schools” ranking by the U.S. News and World Report. Schools are ranked on their performance on state-required tests, graduation rates, and how well they prepare students for college. Other factors include opportunities to take Advanced Placement coursework and exams, AP participation rate, and how well our economically disadvantaged students perform.

AP COURSES SAVE KHS STUDENTS THOUSANDS

Last year’s Advanced Placement (AP) scores are in, and KHS students performed

well! Students taking AP exams earned scores that translated into college credit on 51 tests! Each credit-earning score gave students a minimum of three credit hours of college. With the average college tuition one credit hour cost of \$477, this translates into at least \$72,981 in savings for KHS students who passed AP courses during the 2023–2024 school year.

WELCOMING NEW STAFF TO KHS

KHS welcomes four new staff members to the building! These faces may not be new to Kalkaska Public Schools, but they are new to the high school. If you see any of them around town or at an event, be sure to

welcome them to this new adventure.

Heather Reust

Mrs. Reust has been in education and teaching at Kalkaska Public Schools for 17 years. She has degrees from Northwestern Michigan College, Grand Valley State University, Marygrove College, and Western Governors College. She has been married to her husband, Tom (who also works for KPS) for 20 years, and they have three daughters. All of their children have either graduated from or currently attend KPS! In her spare time, Mrs. Reust enjoys gardening, being in nature, building, reading,

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BULLETIN

Kalkaska Public Schools
315 S. Coral St.
Kalkaska, Michigan 49646

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RCE students ready for the year

Rockstars prepare to learn, enjoy new playground

We are ready to rock this school year at RCE! The start of the year brings exciting changes that we can't wait to share with you.

One of the most exciting updates is our brand new playground at Rapid City Elementary! This new addition is designed to provide a fun and engaging space for our students to play, explore, and build friendships.

We would also like to extend a warm Rockstar welcome to our new special education teacher, Mr. Schneider. We are excited to have him on our team and look forward to the positive impact he will bring to our school community.

In addition, our Specials curriculum, STEAM (Science, Technology, PE, Art, Music) will now be taught throughout the school day by our very own Ms. Klaf. We

believe this will enhance our students' learning experience.

Additionally, our popular after-school program, SEEDS, will begin on Monday, September 9.

We encourage all students to participate and take advantage of this wonderful opportunity!



READY TO LEARN

RCE students came back to school refreshed and excited — and ready to learn!

Back to school for BSE

Students return to school, new beginnings

Welcome back to school, everyone! We are excited to kick off another fantastic year filled with learning, growth, and fun experiences. The first week back to school has been an exciting time filled with new beginnings! Students engaged in icebreakers to get to know their classmates, establish classroom routines, and set goals for the year ahead.

Please Remember

If you are trying to reach the Birch Street office for your kindergartener, first or second grader, please call (231) 258-8629.

Morning Drop-Off

- ★ Students should be dropped off after 7:30 am. Doors are locked until 7:30 and staff are not present to ensure student safety.
- ★ Any student getting dropped off by entering the car line must exit the vehicle on the right hand side in the right lane. For safety reasons, the left lane is ONLY to be used to exit the car line after your student has exited the vehicle.

If you are trying to reach the Kalkaska Upper Elementary office for your third, fourth, or fifth grader, please call (231) 258-9146. We appreciate your continued patience and understanding.

Please remember we are working together to provide the best experience possible for our students and families!

Please welcome new staff at Birch Street Elementary Title 1 paraprofessional, Autumn Kirkland.



Events

- ★ September 16-20 — Homecoming Spirit Week
- ★ September 18 — School Pictures
- ★ September 27 — No School — Staff Professional Development
- ★ October 17 — 1/2-day students — Parent/Teacher Conferences (afternoon and evening)
- ★ October 18 — No School

WELCOME BACK!

Many welcome back to school pictures were taken the first couple days at Birch Street Elementary. Please help to welcome new paraprofessional Autumn Kirkland (bottom left).





THE MIDDLE SCHOOL ROCKS!

(Top Left) Mr. Karazia and Mrs. Reust, along with last year's advisory classes, updated our amazing Student Learning Garden and added outdoor classroom seating. Thank You to Mrs. Reust, CIS, KPS Band and all of our community partners who helped make Blazer Bash 2024 an amazing success. Kalkaska Middle School is excited to welcome our newest teaching staff members: Mrs. Zebolsky (Learning Specialist), Mr. Ingraham (Music), and Mrs. Besselsen (ELA 7).

Athletically Speaking

What's Happening in Blazer Nation

SPORTS IN ACTION

Blazer athletes from the high school and middle school are now fully in action! Middle school athletes began practices on August 26, and our high school teams have already had competitions.

ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

Here are three key components for student athletes to maintain their eligibility during the season:

Academics — Each student athlete must be passing (>59%) in all of their classes. The Athletic Department completes grade checks every other Monday to verify academic standing. It is the responsibility of the student athlete to keep current with their academic work and maintain good grades. Work that is turned in late, and retakes of quizzes/tests that the student failed, do not receive preferential treatment. They will be graded by the teacher in accordance to school policy and in the order it was received.

Daily attendance — Each student athlete must be in attendance for the entirety of the school day to be eligible to participate in practices and competitions. Tardiness to school at the beginning of the day or between classes during the day is covered by the school attendance policy. However, absences that are not pre-

excused for reasons listed in our student handbook, including athletes who sign themselves out early from school, cause the athlete to be ineligible.



Other items — The return of previously issued uniforms/equipment, fully completed physical form on file, and payment of the participation fee (KHS — \$50, KMS — \$25) prior to the first competition are also required for athlete eligibility.

SAFETY WITH HEAT & HUMIDITY

Summer weather is still with us, including hot spells with high-heat index values. Our coaches have been trained on the MHSAA Model Policy for Heat and Humidity and regularly take steps to

adjust practice routines and hydration schedules to keep our athletes healthy and safe.

At home, there are steps that families can take as well because a good hydration strategy starts way before practices or competitions. Drinking water in the morning and throughout the day is key. Sports drinks with electrolytes during and after practices/games can be helpful too, but beware of the sugar content. Avoid so-called energy drinks with high levels of sugar, caffeine, or other artificial stimulants. These can actually cause dehydration and have harmful side effects.

JOIN OUR TEAM!

If you are interested in helping out with Blazer Athletics, or are interested in sponsorship opportunities, please contact Athletic Director Bryan Hawkins (athletics@kpschools.com).

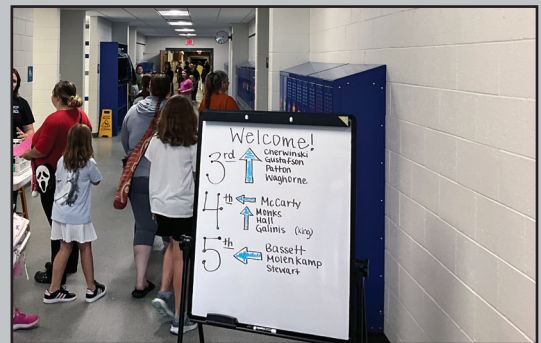
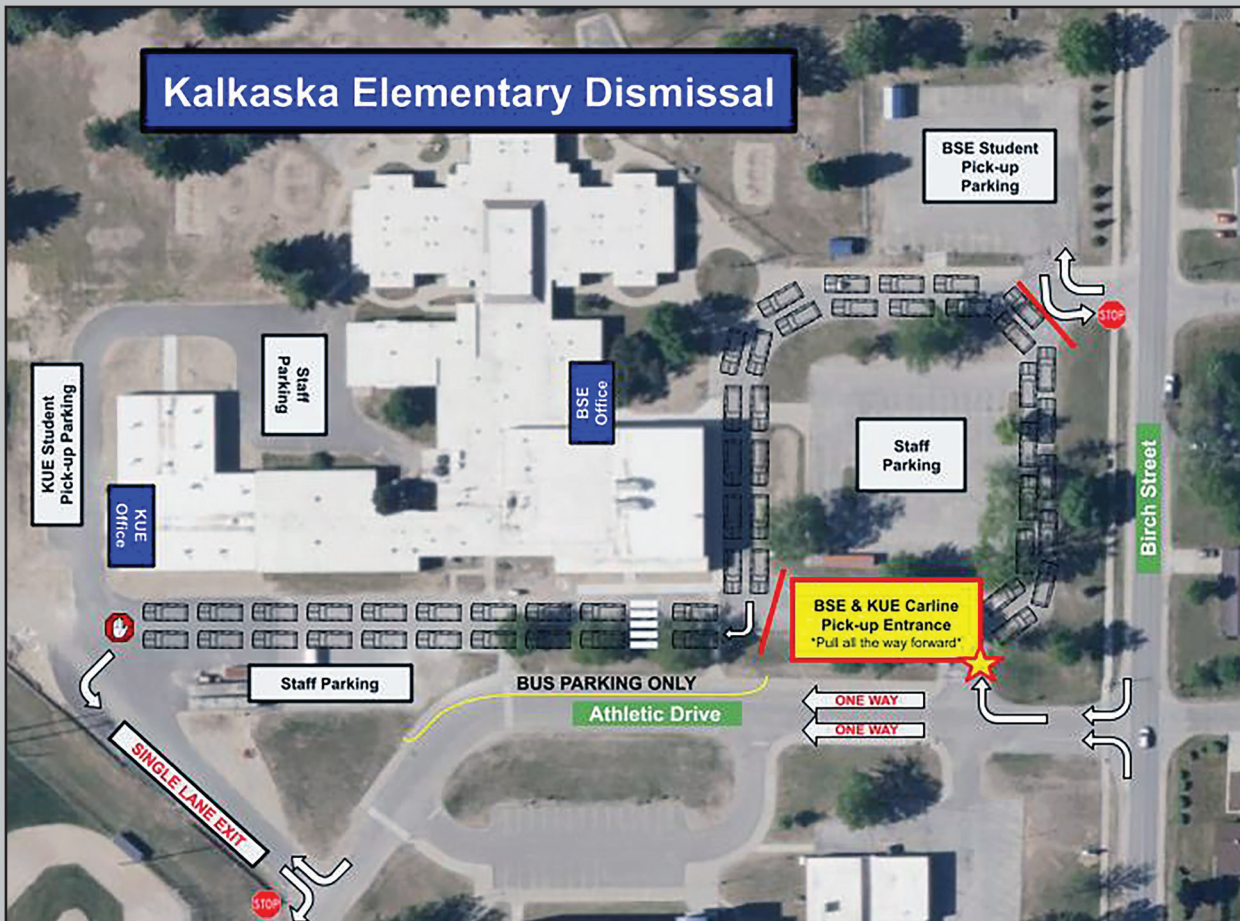


#BLAZERPIDE

KUE students learning new skills

The Kalkaska Upper Elementary Open House was a big success. We were excited to see our new students and welcome back our returning students. Families were lined up before we could open our doors!

The Kalkaska Elementary School (this includes both Birch Street and the Upper Elementary) has a new dismissal process. We are using a double line system that will start at the yield sign by the KUE entrance and snake around the building to the Birch Street Elementary entrance. Each student has a specific number assigned to them, and we collect that number from the parents in line at dismissal. This number helps us organize the students so we can bring them out to the parents. We appreciate the patience parents have shown us as we work through this new procedure.



KUE HAPPENINGS!

It's welcome back time at the upper elementary school — and people were lined up at the door to get in on Open House afternoon!

Teen Health Corner

KALKASKA MEMORIAL HEALTH CENTER

YOUR HEALTH MATTERS TO US

Our Services

- Primary Care Provider
- Mental Health Services
- Annual Physical/Well Child
- On-Site Lab testing
- Immunizations
- Sick/Urgent Care
- Sports Injury/Concussion
- On-Site Medicaid enrollment
- Tele-Health visits
- Much more

OPEN DURING UN-FORESEEN SCHOOL CLOSURES, BREAKS, AND ALL SUMMER!

CALL US NOW

231-258-7791 Kalkaska

231-369-2000 Forest Area

231-258-7922 KMS

ABOUT US

Teen Health Corner takes pride in providing compassionate and comprehensive care to youth in a teen friendly setting for 10-21 year olds at the Kalkaska Clinic and 5-21 year olds at the Forest Area clinic. We also provide Behavioral Health services for 5-21 year olds at the Kalkaska Middle School clinic.

Blazer Libraries



Strong Readers are Successful Students!



THANK YOU

Kalkaska Public Schools would like to thank the American Legion Post 480 for the generous donation of \$500 to help get needed supplies for our students and families.



HOMECOMING!

SEPTEMBER 20

VS. CHEBOYGAN

KALKASKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Regan Foerster

Sarah Dudek

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Cari Jo Roberts, Executive Assistant

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David Tucker, Human Resources Director

1120

1101

1104

1116

Senior High — 258-9167

Staci Short, Principal

Aaron Ostrander, Assistant Principal

Mary Deb Rabourn, Secretary

Rhonda Wurtz, Secretary

2103

2170

2173

2102

Kalkaska Alternative Program — 258-2777

Josh England, Dean of Students

Blazer Bulletin

Published by KPS

Superintendent: Rick Heitmeyer

The Blazer Bulletin is published during the school year from September—June. If you have any suggestions, or questions, please contact the office at (231) 258-9109 between the hours of 8 a.m.—4 p.m. Editorial assistance provided by Kalkaska County Library Director John P. Roberts.

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Middle — 258-4040

Scott Morey, Principal

Sara Waterman, Secretary

Nickey Torrey, Secretary

3205

3201

3203

Birch Street Elementary — 258-8629

Arica Zenner, Principal

Tracy Dimon, Secretary

Melissa Patnode, Secretary

4204

4200

4202

Early Childhood Learning Center — 258-0257

Arica Zenner, Director

Kalkaska Upper Elementary — 258-9146

Ryan Moore, Principal

Sue Woodruff, Secretary

5106

5107

Rapid City Elementary — 331-6121

Laura Gehman, Principal

Robyn Czuk, Secretary

6103

6101

Athletics — 258-9167

Bryan Hawkins, Athletic Director

Linda Colvin, Secretary

2236

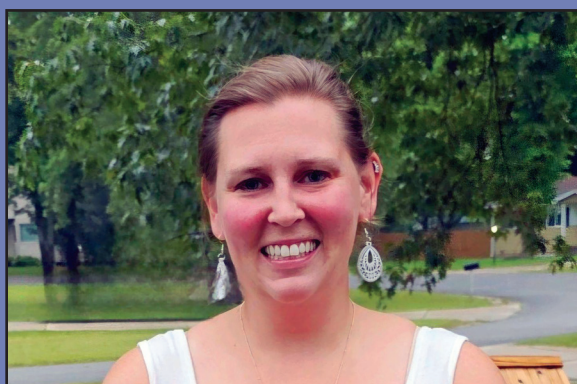
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BLAZERS



and learning. She loves building relationships with her students and learning from them. She also loves seeing students recognize their success and realize they can accomplish something. She describes this feeling as “amazing.” In addition to experiences teaching at both the elementary and middle schools, coaching, and mentoring NJHS students, Mrs. Reust has also been the organizer of our Blazer Bash for the past three years.

Ashley Boger



Mrs. Boger has been in education for 12 years, and 10 of them have been with Kalkaska Public Schools. She completed both her Bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees at Saginaw Valley State University. Along

with her husband, Darrell, she is raising two Blazers, Charlotte and Brexlee. They love family time, bonfires, and music. Mrs. Boger is a Kalkaska native, and proud to be serving her community. She says, “Nothing is more gratifying than seeing the success of former students outside the classroom.”

Jessica Davenport



Ms. Davenport is joining Kalkaska High School as our new Communities in Schools coordinator. She has been working with KPS as a paraprofessional for the past seven years and loves working with kids to help them understand different concepts. Ms. Davenport was born and raised in Kalkaska and moved back to the area after some different life adventures about eight years ago. She enjoys reading, hanging out with her son, and occasional hikes. She reports that she is excited to be with CIS to help make a bigger impact on our students, families, and community.

Kyle Kimball

Mr. Kimball is joining Kalkaska High School to teach English Language Arts

and Social Studies. He graduated college from BYU—Idaho, and taught high school social studies there for several years. He stepped into this role in the middle of the second semester last year and has already begun to impact achievement and learning in a positive way. Mr. Kimball is returning to the area with his wife and five children. They enjoy going to the beach as a family; we are looking forward to involving all of them in KPS activities. Mr. Kimball enjoys interacting with students and watching them excel beyond the classroom. He finds both teaching and coaching to be rewarding in a variety of ways and says the greatest achievement he had as a teacher was being selected by students he taught to represent the teachers on graduation day. Shaking their hands as they received their diplomas confirmed that he had made a difference in their lives and he is looking forward to bringing that to KHS!

These new staff members are true blue Blazers, and we are so excited to have them joining the KHS Staff!



Kalkaska Fight Song

Smash right through that line big Blue.
 Watch the points keep growing.
 Blazer teams are bound to win.
 They're fighting with the vim. Rah, rah, rah!
 See that line, it's weakening.
 We're going to win this game.
 Fight, fight, rah, team fight!
 Victory for Blue and White!

