



# Promise

## A Brave Publication

Indian Hill Exempted Village School District

Fall  
2020

**Brave Return to School – Indian Hill invests  
in bringing students back, safely** Page 6-7



**Welcome to the 2020-2021  
school year, Braves!**



A message from our  
**Superintendent**

## We see the smiles.

Yes – we are all outfitted in masks for protection – but you simply can't hide smiling eyes!

From the first day of Brave Virtual Academy to our face-to-face welcome back that allowed us two "first-day-of-school" moments, we could not contain how excited we felt to have our students back for our Brave Return to School!

Does the 2020-2021 school year look a little differently than the past?

Absolutely.

The well-being of our students and our staff is our No. 1 priority. As a District, we made a significant investment in safety. The protocols we put in place, developed during the summer in conjunction with expert safety consultants, are detailed in this publication.

That is only part of the story for this school year.

You will see several reasons to celebrate throughout these pages. From an invitation for our Indian Hill High School Mock Trial Team to compete at Yale, to state-level accolades from the *Just Write* competitive writing competition, our students continue to amaze!

The unparalleled opportunities we offer in academics, the arts, and athletics continue to make us uniquely Indian Hill. One thing remains the same and will *never* change – our love for our students!

Welcome back, Braves.

Smile on ... it is going to be an excellent school year!

In service to our children,

Kirk Koennecke  
Superintendent  
Indian Hill School District  
[Kirk.Koennecke@indianhillschools.org](mailto:Kirk.Koennecke@indianhillschools.org)  
 @ihsuperbrave



## Welcome to Indian Hill, Class of 2033!

Indian Hill Superintendent Kirk Koennecke greeted Class of 2033 kindergarten students both virtually and in person for the 2020-2021 Brave Return to School.





## A message from **Treasurer Mick Davis**



### **Our needs are real.**

Over the years, the District has had to divert funds from the daily operating budget to provide for building maintenance, upkeep, and upgrades needed throughout the District's campus. The last operating levy was more than 25 years ago. The District continues to operate from levies passed in the 1980s and earlier with a near-zero inflationary increase.



Additionally, we are also taking into consideration the financial impact of COVID-19. The pandemic has created a situation for school districts of an uncertain financial future in terms of state funding. Immediately following the announcement of COVID-19, we saw a significant and immediate shortfall in the State's revenue which was passed to the budget items, such as school funding, and the Indian Hill School District endured an immediate loss of more than \$200,000. We still are unsure of how COVID-19 will ultimately impact our District finances.

### **The work continues.**

During the 2019-2020 school year, our dedicated team of Indian Hill School District residents who comprised the community-based Finance Steering Committee and the Facilities Steering Committee delivered comprehensive recommendations for our Board of Education to consider. These reports were the culmination of research into our operations and facilities needs that first began in 2018.



And the work to Build a Brave Future has not stopped.

Members from each of those committees have formed a 2020 Facilities Vision Task Force to continue to meet with our team and outside consultants to develop a draft plan for what the future of our facilities can be, working within a framework first defined by the financial recommendations of the Finance Steering Committee and Facilities Steering Committee.

The volunteers will present a plan to the Board of Education at the end of 2020.

The work of our dedicated volunteers is appreciated. We look forward to sharing the vision they are creating in the near future. In the meantime, we continue to look for ways to operate in a fiscally conservative manner while maintaining the excellent educational services you expect and deserve.

Sincerely,

Mick.Davis@indianhillschools.org



### **Savings to Taxpayers**

The District did an excellent job managing the last bond issue - **structuring the refinancing of bonds to achieve taxpayer savings of \$8.5 million**. That savings comes in the form of reduced millage paid towards the bonds. In 2019, a significant share of what residents pay on this bond expired - reducing the bond debt by 1.74 mills. That means an annual reduction of \$304 on a \$500,000 home, and an annual saving of \$609 on a \$1 million home. Additionally, residents will see another reduction of 1.4 mills in 2027.

To offset the loss of state funding due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of Education voted in May 2020 to **restructure custodial operations through outsourcing services**. **The District will save approximately \$325,000 annually as a result**.

# Unparalleled Opportunities

## ACADEMICS



### Braves Make Headlines



We congratulate the 18 Indian Hill High School students recognized by the National Merit Scholarship Program!

Five Braves named Semifinalists in the 2021 scholarship competition

#### Indian Hill High School students to compete in exclusive Yale Mock Trial Association tournament



This October, seven Indian Hill High School (IHHS) students will participate in the Bulldog Invitational, an invitation-only mock trial tournament hosted annually by the Yale Mock Trial Association.

"Based on our seven state championships, one world championship, and Ethan Marx's recent Gladiator national championship, Yale has taken note of our program," said Indian Hill High School Teacher and Mock Trial Sponsor Steve Reger. "We are thrilled to receive this first-time invitation to compete at such an elite level."

Yale's Bulldog Invitational consists of two parts: A dynamic workshop series taught by Yale's Mock Trial association and a four-round tournament where the top high school teams in the country have the opportunity to compete against each other. Indian Hill High School will be represented by students Ethan Marx, Sarah Motawi, Sydney Poffenberger, Audrey Bristol, Brooke Youngblood, Tacey Hutten, and Claire Hardek via an online format.



#### Indian Hill High School students get it 'Just Write' at state competition



Indian Hill High School (IHHS) congratulates the seven students who competed at the Just Write State Competition for competitive writing in May. Two students, Joy On and Elsa Zhou, placed in the top 15 writers! Each will have stories featured in the Just Write anthology showcasing the best from the competition.

"We are incredibly proud of all of our students who competed, and we want to send special congratulations to Joy and Elsa

who were still in their freshmen year when they placed as top writers in the state!" said Indian Hill High School Teacher Tom Millard.

The Just Write State Competition was restructured and held online. Student writers participated in three rounds, each 45 minutes long. For each round, writers were given a prompt and required to write in one of seven genres: Historical Fiction, Science Fiction, Realistic Fiction, Mystery, Classic Horror/Gothic, Fantasy, and Narrative Nonfiction. The Indian Hill High School state competitors included: Callie Gibson, Julianne Lambert, Ricky Martin, Marianna Narita, Joy On, Samara Summers, and Elsa Zhou.



#### Indian Hill students earn accolades in National Junior Classical League

This year, the National Junior Classical League (NJCL) Convention went online July 24-29, and two Indian Hill High School students participated and placed! We congratulate Indian Hill High School Class of 2020 graduate Olivia Sheldon and rising sophomore Alex Sheldon.

In Graphic Arts, Alex Sheldon earned: magna cum laude, Art Portfolio, grade 9; summa cum laude, Quarantine, grade 9; magna cum laude, Impromptu Art, grades 7-9. In E-lympica, she earned: first place, Trick Shot and Push Ups; second place, Sit Ups. Additionally, Alex Sheldon was featured in the "That's Entertainment" talent show with a pre-recorded gymnastics routine choreographed to the song "Pompeii" by Bastille.

In Graphic Arts, Olivia Sheldon earned summa cum laude, Art Portfolio, grade 12; summa cum laude, Quarantine, grade 12; summa cum laude, Impromptu Art, grade 12. In Academic Testing, she earned third place, Classical Art, level 5+.



#### Indian Hill Middle School Navig8tes student leaders to help launch a Brave Return to School

Leadership is not limited to educators at Indian Hill Middle School. Before the official start of the school year, teachers welcomed back eighth grade student-leaders early in a socially distanced learning setting as training to prepare to welcome incoming sixth grade students as part of the Navig8tors program.

"We are incredibly proud of our Navig8tors program, and we are thrilled to continue to call upon our student-leaders to serve as role models for our incoming class of sixth grade students," said Indian Hill Middle School Principal Jennifer Ulland. "Even though school will not look the same as it has in past years, we are working to create a safe, nurturing environment for all of our students. Keeping programs like this in place, with social distancing procedures being followed, is key to help our students socially and emotionally make the transition into middle school."

# Promise

## **Presidential Scholars Program Distinguished Teacher: Mark Atwood**



IHHS shines the spotlight on educational leader and Latin Teacher Mark Atwood who was recently named a 2020 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program Distinguished Teacher. Atwood was nominated by IHHS Class of 2020 graduate and current Columbia University student Liz Radway for the prestigious recognition.

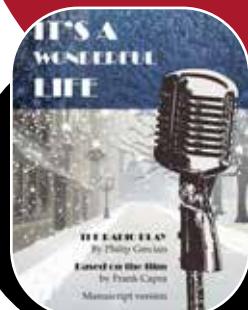
## **Indian Hill School District earns history-making 24 awards during Blue Chip celebration!**



Fourteen Braves won a combined 13 Blue Chip Awards and were recognized for a total of 24 awards for broadcasting during the annual ceremony!

## **POW WOW 2021: "Hello, Dolly!"**

Dolly Gallagher Levi is longing for her personal joy to return. Always looking to assist others first, this matchmaker is determined to find happiness "before the parade passes by." As we too look forward to the day of a joyous return to live performance, we have several potential scenarios for how this production can occur in 2021 and plans will be continually evolving to ensure safety for all performers and patrons. Be sure to mark your calendars for February 18-20, 2021 with auditions happening the last week in October that are open to all high school students. Info can be found at [bit.ly/IHTheatre](http://bit.ly/IHTheatre)



## **LOVE AND LIGHT: A UNITY VIRTUAL EVENT October 20**

The IHHS Choirs are partnering with our District's Courageous Conversations group for a virtual unity event. Featuring uplifting and inspirational performances and quotes with music/lyrics by women, BIPOC, and LGBTQIA individuals, this event will be showcasing artistic talents by both students and staff members. A livestream will be presented on the evening of October 20. More information will be shared closer to the performance!



## **IHMS & IHHS present "It's a Wonderful Life!"**

Coming soon! Your chance to see a recording of the Indian Hill Middle School & Indian Hill High School production of "It's a Wonderful Life!" ... stay tuned for details!

## **Cross Country Participates in Buddy Walk for Down Syndrome**



## **IHHS Senior Meghan O'Brien Named LaRosa's MVP of the Week**



**We are so proud of our student-athletes; please use your smartphone to access complete stories about how our Braves are learning and achieving outside the classroom through Indian Hill Athletics!**

## **Indian Hill Football Team Breaks Out in Skyline Chili Crosstown Showdown**



Photo: Jim Owens, Enquirer



## **Field Hockey Feature: Building a Team from the Ground Up**



**ARTS**  
**ATHLETICS**



# Brave Return to School



## MULTIPLE PLANS DEVELOPED



**PLAN A:**  
In-Person Learning or Online Option

**PLAN B:**  
Hybrid In-Person / Distance Learning

**PLAN C:**  
Distance Learning for All Students

### BRAVE VIRTUAL ACADEMY Open to all students K-12

**"Safety must be a part of our DNA during the 2020-2021 school year; this is supported by our Board of Education, and it will be put into practice as we embark on this historic school year. We are in this together!"**

-Superintendent Kirk Koennecke

**During the summer, our Brave team worked with several safety consultants and county health officials to learn best practices in planning for safety during COVID-19. We want to share with you these plans in detail.**

#### Safety Protocols

##### Board Approved Face Covering Policy

- Face coverings are required for all K-12 students, staff, and visitors.
- Face shields cannot be a daily substitute for a face mask; they can be used as an additional layer of protection and for approved learning environments requiring the use of a shield for staff and/or students.
- See-through face masks have been purchased for staff.
- Pediatric and adult size face masks have been purchased for supplies.
- Face shields have been purchased for staff.
- Face shields have been purchased for students in grades K-3.

##### Daily Health Check Equipment

- Mobile thermometers have been provided for all nurse stations; at all entry points; to coaches and supervisors.
- Sign-in logs are stationed at all entry points.
- The District is using PickUp Patrol to log the health of staff and students daily.

##### Physical Barriers

- We have installed plexiglass barriers on all tables in classrooms at Indian Hill Primary School, and on small-group tables in classrooms at Indian Hill Elementary School.
- Divider screens are installed on cafeteria tables in all schools prior to school starting.
- Additional divider screens are installed in classrooms at Indian Hill Middle School and Indian Hill High School (primarily for Plan A).
- We have installed barrier screens at all entry administrative assistant stations, guidance counselor offices, and nurses' stations.



##### Hand Sanitizer/Hand Washing

- We have installed stationary dispensers across the District.
- We have installed stationary dispensers in classrooms.
- Mobile hand sanitizing stations have been placed at all entrances.



##### Cleansing Wipes

- Cleansing wipes will be used in areas where multiple students need to occupy a seat.



##### Air Flow/HVAC

- New ventilation filters have been installed in the ductwork.
- Air filtration systems are to be utilized in classrooms.



##### Visual Signs

- Cues for foot traffic and movement through buildings are installed.
- Directional stickers were placed on floors in all buildings.
- Outdoor/indoor venue signs were installed for public notice, COVID-19 protocols.
- COVID-19 symptom and screening flow charts were provided for every classroom.
- Website resource documents were added under the Brave Return to School page.



##### Enhanced Outdoor Usage

- Multiple outdoor classrooms were created at each school.
- Additional cleaning will be provided for current outdoor spaces.



##### Cleaning Products

- Vital Oxide will be used during the day in cafeteria, bus, and in classrooms; it has a "0" rating (no health, respiratory, or fire risk; even when the surface is wet).
- Each school and bus will be equipped with a handheld sprayer that provides a fine mist that quickly disinfects surfaces in spaces like the bus and cafeteria.

##### Transportation

- Each bus that is used to transport students will be cleaned after every run on a daily basis.
- A Safe Trip School Travel Checklist was developed for all staff and students.

##### Other

- An Activities Guidebook was developed for Brave Return to School activities.
- We will maintain a weekly Athletic Log of suspected COVID-19 cases.
- We will maintain a weekly after-school, non-athletic activity log of suspected COVID-19 cases.
- In addition to cafeteria space, additional spaces are being used to provide distancing while eating lunch.



## The Indian Hill School District presents Brave Virtual Academy

The Indian Hill School District is excited to present Brave Virtual Academy as our new learning option for Indian Hill families wanting to study in a flexible, online environment. Our priority is to make sure students, their families, and our educators work together to build a world-class learning environment for students.

"We examined several factors that together compose an excellent learning experience, including learner motivation, proper stimulus, evaluation of application of learning, engagement in feedback, and celebration of progress. These were all woven into the fabric of Brave Virtual Academy to ensure our online model is what our students and parents expect from an Indian Hill education," said Dr. Kim Given, supervisor of Brave Virtual Academy.

As a part of Indian Hill's Brave Virtual Academy, many things will be similar to what our face-to-face learners experience. Learners will have a mix of live and asynchronous learning incorporating the best of teaching practices:

- **Personalization:** providing unique learning pathways for individual students
- **Agency:** giving learners opportunities to participate in key decisions in their learning experience
- **Authentic Audience:** giving learners the opportunity to create for a real audience both locally and globally
- **Connectivity:** giving learners opportunities to experience learning in collaboration with peers and experts locally and globally
- **Creativity:** providing learners individual and collaborative opportunities to make things that matter while building skills for their future

"Our Brave Virtual Academy students are our students, and they will be a part of all we do as a District. This began with an opening of school celebration, relationship building, and discussing our hopes and expectations for our learning time together," said Indian Hill Assistant Superintendent Dr. Melissa Stewart. "We are very excited to engage with our students and our families in this new, innovative way."

Indian Hill High School student Sophie Chabris created the **IHHS Corona Care Callers Program**. The mission of the program is to create meaningful connections between students, particularly those who are part of Indian Hill's Brave Virtual Academy. When Chabris shared her plan with fellow Indian Hill High School students, more than 100 signed up to volunteer their time! Chabris plans to offer these virtual meetings between students either weekly or monthly depending on schedules.



**As part of our Brave Return to School, each building principal gave a video tour to Braves to see the safety updates.**

Use your smartphone camera to access these videos using the QR codes. We also designed a Brave Return to School web resource so parents had easy access to important information.



**IHPS**



**IHES**



**IHMS**



**IHHS**



**Brave Virtual Academy kicked off the school year with a virtual ice cream social!**





## Indian Hill Exempted Village School District

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## ianhillschools.org

The Indian Hill Exempted Village School District serves students in the Village of Indian Hill, Kenwood, parts of Sycamore and Symmes Township, Camp Dennison and a small portion of Loveland.

### DON'T MISS OUT: beBRAVE

Stay informed by signing up to receive this weekly electronic District publication highlighting the Indian Hill School District #IHPromise in Action!

#### It's News Braves Need!

Scan QR code to sign up and select IH District or visit our District website [ianhillschools.org](http://ianhillschools.org)



#### Indian Hill School District announces Dr. Kim Given as supervisor of new Brave Virtual Academy

Veteran educator Dr. Kim Given is serving students, families, and staff in the new role of Brave Virtual Academy supervisor for the 2020-2021 school year. Dr. Given, who most recently served the District as a gifted intervention specialist at Indian Hill Middle School, has more than 30 years of experience in education and has dedicated more than 25 years in service to the students and families at the Indian Hill School District.



#### Indian Hill welcomes Andrew Gruber to the administrative team

The Indian Hill School District welcomes Andrew Gruber to the administrative team. Gruber will serve as the Assistant Principal of Indian Hill Primary School and Indian Hill Elementary School for the 2020-2021 school year. Gruber comes to the District from St. Xavier High School where he served as the Director of Enrollment Management.



#### Indian Hill welcomes Director of Operations and a new Primary School Principal

We welcome seasoned administrator Jim Nichols to central office in the role of director of operations, and Dr. Erin Owens to the role of Indian Hill Primary School principal with the start of the 2020-2021 school year. The District restructured administrative roles following the departure of Assistant Superintendent Dr. Mark Ault, who left in July to begin serving the Three Rivers School District as superintendent.



#### Indian Hill welcomes new Athletic Director to the Brave team

We welcome Cincinnati native Brian Phelps to the administrative team as the new Athletic Director for the 2020-2021 school year. Phelps comes from the Fort Worth Country Day (FWCD) school in Fort Worth, Texas, where he has served as the director of athletics for two years. Before arriving in Fort Worth, Phelps spent almost 20 years at The Seven Hills School in Cincinnati.



#### Indian Hill High School welcomes new Assistant Principal to the Brave team

We welcome Andrew Renner to the administrative team as the new Indian Hill High School assistant principal. Renner comes from Wyoming City Schools where he has served as the Assistant Principal of Wyoming Middle School since 2018.

NEW FACES