

Brooklyn Bridge

A monthly newsletter connecting you to Wetzel County Schools' County Office

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Wetzel County
Technical
Education
Center

Thank
You

Blair &
Balcerek
Recognized



WV Cafeteria
Manager of
the Year



Fall Trips



JASON Trip
Changes



Benny Card
Changes for
2018-19



2017-18 Attendance,
Drop-Out, and
Graduation Rates

WETZEL COUNTY TECHNICAL EDUCATION CENTER TO OPEN

July 1 will mark the date that the Wetzel County Center for Children and Families will change back to the 'career center' with the name of Wetzel County Technical Education Center, or WCTEC. Starting this fall Wetzel County students will be able to start welding courses. Since April, progress has been made to convert the 'big room' into a twenty station welding lab. Along with the move, the Wetzel County Center for Children and Families, an organization



not directly affiliated with WCS, will be purchasing a building and moving their location to downtown New Martinsville. The WVU Extension office will also be moving to a new location. Head Start will be moving into Magnolia High School, and a new concentration of Early Childhood will be added for high school students. In addition to re-opening the WCTEC, the offices of Transportation, Maintenance, Facilities, and Child Nutrition will also move to that location.



Board Honors Blair & Balcerek

A special recognition was given to Mike Blair and Josh Balcerek at the June 4th meeting of the Board of Education. Mr. Toman, Mr. Grace, Mr. Jones, and Mrs. Cooley presented Mr. Blair and Mr. Balcerek with a plaque, honoring their service as Board Members. Mr. Blair has served 16 years on the Board, and Mr. Balcerek served 4 years. In addition, during the June 18th Board Meeting, Mr. Grace and the Board members presented Mr. Blair with a personalized plaque and gavel honoring his sixteen years of service as member of the Board and fourteen years as Board President. Mr. Grace also commended Mr. Blair's father, David Blair, who served sixteen years on the Board as well. We want to thank Mr. Blair and Mr. Balcerek for their commitment and dedication to the students and staff of Wetzel County Schools.



Photo Credit: Ed Parsons—Wetzel Chronicle



WV Manager of the Year

Candy Landers, Cafeteria Manager at Paden City Elementary, was selected as the West Virginia School Nutrition Association Cafeteria Manager of the Year. She was honored at the WVSNA Annual Conference. Candy has worked for Wetzel County Schools for 28 years, served as the Wetzel County School Nutrition Association President, and was recently elected as Region II Representative for the WVSNA. She also holds her Level 1 SNA Certificate. In addition, Candy was awarded \$1000 from the WVDE Office of Child Nutrition to help cover expenses to the National School Nutrition Association Conference in Las Vegas, where she will be recognized as West Virginia's Cafeteria Manager of the Year.



Wetzel County Schools
website

wetzelcountyschools.com

The date for the Wetzel County 5K has been moved to fall. Keep watching for more information!

<https://aptiming.com/race/wetzel5>

Trainings

Don't forget to use the ERO system to register and check for updates!

<http://ero5.eschoolsolutions.com>

District ID: 26155



17-18 Attendance, Drop-Out, and Graduation Rates

2017-18 school year: Wetzel County Schools had an attendance rate of 93%. Paden City Elementary led all schools with over a 94% rate, while Paden City High School had the highest attendance rate of all high schools, at 94% as well. The drop-out rate was less than 1% for the seventh year in a row and our county's graduation rate was over 90% for the fifth year in a row, per the most recent released data.

Fall Extracurricular Trips

Fall trips will begin on Monday, July 30th, 2018 and conclude on Saturday, December 1st, 2018. Please submit forms for fall trips to Jill Fox at the County Office by **Friday, July 20th, 2018**.

Additional forms are available by contacting Jill Fox at extension 117. Fall trips will be **ASSIGNED WEDNESDAY, JULY 25th, 2018**. It is very important that the **JULY 20th deadline is observed, allowing drivers to pick their trips as opposed to the County Office appointing drivers**. We understand that some trips are scheduled at a later date. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.



- Energy Express is June 18- July 27, each weekday from 8:30 am -12:30 pm.
- Energy Express is for students entering the 1st through 6th grades next school year
- 7th grade and up may attend as volunteers and receive breakfast and lunch
- **Transportation is provided to Energy Express each day**
- **Breakfast and lunch provided each day**
- Attendance is encouraged for the whole program, but children may miss for vacations or other family events.

HRA/BENNY CARD 18/19

The way we use our Benny (HRA) Card is changing beginning with the 2018/19 fiscal year.

Beginning July 1, 2018, as long as you (and your dependents) have health care coverage, your HRA card may be used for medical purposes – regardless of who your health insurance coverage is through or who the primary card holder is. As long as you have health care coverage, this card may be used for all approved medical purposes for all dependents listed on your income tax return. The one stipulation is that you (and your dependents) must be covered through Wetzel County's eye/dental plan (American Benefits) – which most dependents are since this coverage is provided at no cost to you.

When the HRA card is used, receipts must be submitted to American Benefits Corporation (ABC). Generally, you do not have to provide receipts if your card is used for a specific dentist or eye doctor since ABC is the insurance provider of that coverage; however, in order to take advantage of your HRA card for medical expenses, you will need to submit receipts to them such as the EOB from your insurance company, the receipt statement for prescription drugs, etc. You also have the option of paying for your medical expenses yourself and submit a receipt to ABC for reimbursement.

A "Health Reimbursement Account FAQ's" will be sent to each school along with information showing both eligible and ineligible expenses. Please remember that just because your card has been accepted at a pharmacy, etc., does not mean it is an eligible expense. If you do not comply with ABC's request for receipts, your card could be suspended until such time as they receive the proper documentation or repayment has been made.

Health Insurance Premium Rates for the 2018-19 Year

Last week, the Governor asked that PEIA make adjustments to the salary tiers (also known as idx codes) for the 2018-19 school year so that the pay increases granted by the legislature would not cause any employees to move into a higher tier, resulting in increased premiums. The PEIA Finance Board met and agreed to increase the salary ranges by \$2,700 for the 2018-19 year. Per discussions with PEIA, the change in the idx codes will not be effective until August 1, 2018. This means that the employee premium rates for the month of July 2018 will be based on the employee's FY18 salary level and the FY18 idx codes. The employee premiums for the month of August 2018 will be based on the employee's new FY19 salary level and the FY19 higher idx codes. If an employee made a change in their plan or coverage level during open enrollment that becomes effective on July 1, 2018, the premium for July will be for the new plan/changed coverage level but using the FY18 salary and idx codes.





JASON Argonauts Headed to the Andorran Pyrenees

Due to a Travel Advisory issued by the US Government, the Student and Teacher Argonauts who were originally assigned to the Nicaragua expedition team will now participate in research in the **Andorran Pyrenees**. In these mountains on the border between France and Spain they will study a variety of wildlife species to determine the impact climate change may be having on this sensitive ecosystem.

Andorra is a land-locked state bordered by France and Spain in the eastern Pyrenees mountains. It is the sixth smallest nation in Europe. While the official language is Catalan, the project will be conducted in English. Due to its location in the Pyrenees, Andorra consists predominantly of rugged mountains, and the average elevation is 6,500 feet above sea level. Andorra has an alpine and continental climate, and its higher elevation means there is typically more snow in winter, low humidity, and cooler days in the summer.

The Pyrenees expedition will take place from **August 4-10, 2018.**

