



# VIKING NAVIGATOR

## EVERGREEN LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

### 3 CANDIDATES COMPETE FOR 2 BOE SEATS

In November, voters will elect two individuals to serve as members of the Evergreen Board of Education (BOE). There are three candidates running for two seats. The incumbents seeking re-election are Nora Kiefer (two terms served) and Zach Murry (one term served). Rusty Carr is the new candidate. The term of office is four years and will begin January 1, 2024. According to the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA), the role of a school board is to act as the governance team for the school district and to serve as a positive and responsible liaison between the school district and community.

#### MEET THE CANDIDATES NIGHT

The community is invited to Meet the Candidates Night on Wednesday, November 1 at 7:00 pm in the EHS gym. The EHS AP Government class is hosting the event and will include questions for each candidate.



**Nora Kiefer**

**Personal Info:** After graduating from EHS in 2002, I attended Siena Heights University and

received a bachelor's degree in biology. I am a microbiologist and my current occupation is a Water Treatment Superintendent for the Village of Blissfield. I married my high school sweetheart, Michael Kiefer, and we have three children: Addison (gr. 11), Landon (gr. 8) and Taylor (gr. 6).

**Why do you want to be a BOE member?**

It is my belief that a strong school system helps ensure a quality and tight-knit community (like ours) for generations to come. It's my motivation and belief that if we consistently push to improve and evolve Evergreen's standard of Education, we can deliver promising futures for each and everyone of our Viking students.



**Zach Murry**

**Personal Info:** I am a proud 2000 graduate of Evergreen as well as of The Ohio State University and

the Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law. I am a member of the law firm of Barkan & Robin, Ltd. in Maumee, OH. I currently have three children enrolled in the district, attending the EES and EMS buildings.

**Why do you want to be a BOE member?**

This district is special due to the hard work and commitment of our families, our teachers and staff, and the entire Evergreen Community. It is my privilege to do what I can to serve my community and to help make Evergreen a great place to learn and grow.



**Rusty Carr**

**Personal Info:** I am a 1997 graduate of Evergreen High School. I have been employed by

Yark Automotive in Toledo, OH in the parts department in customer service for the past 21 years.

**Why do you want to be a BOE member?**

I have always wanted to serve and give back to the community that I have always thought so highly of and have always called home. If you know me in any way, you know that Evergreen is a very big part of my life. I want a voice in helping make Evergreen the best school system possible; a new voice with new ideas.

## BOARD MEMBERS

- Nora Kiefer - President  
nkiefer@evgvikings.org
- Jason Miller - Vice-President  
jmiller@evgvikings.org
- Zach Murry  
zmurry@evgvikings.org
- Don Smith  
dsmith@evgvikings.org
- Matt Vaculik  
mvaculik@evgvikings.org

## CONTACT INFO

By phone, use 419-644-3521 unless otherwise indicated.\*

- Eric Smola, Ext 1132  
Superintendent  
esmola@evgvikings.org
- Dolores Swineford, Ext 1116  
Asst. Superintendent &  
Curriculum Director  
dswineford@evgvikings.org
- Brian Carroll, Ext 1134  
Treasurer  
bcarroll@evgvikings.org
- Dawn Spradlin, Ext 1164  
Transportation Coordinator  
dspradlin@evgvikings.org
- Jenny Conrad, Ext 1119  
Communications Director  
jconrad@evgvikings.org
- Brady Ruffer, Ext 1104  
High School Principal  
bruffer@evgvikings.org
- Dylan Henricks, Ext 1118  
HS & MS Athletic Director  
dhenricks@evgvikings.org
- Lucas Burkholder, Ext 1136  
Middle School Principal  
lburkholder@evgvikings.org
- Sherrie Brown  
Elementary Principal  
sbrown@evgvikings.org  
\*419-644-9221, Ext 3204

## RENEWAL LEVY ON THE NOV. BALLOT

The Evergreen Local Board of Education has placed a 0.5% levy renewal on the upcoming November 7, 2023 ballot. This levy will expire on December 31, 2024 and accounts for approximately \$1.4 million of the District's General Fund. If passed, it will take effect on January 1, 2025 and it will run for five years, expiring at the end of December 2029. This is not a new tax. If the levy does not pass, it will return on the May 2024 ballot.

Schools are funded by the State of Ohio through the Ohio Department of Education, local property taxes, and a local income tax established by a traditional tax base. Evergreen Local Schools is currently funded by three income tax levies that when combined totals 1.5%. The levy breakdown includes:

- Levy 1 = 0.75% continuing
- Levy 2 = 0.25% renewed November 2022, continues through December 2027
- Levy 3 = 0.50% expires on December 31, 2024

As already stated, this levy is responsible for approximately \$1,400,000.00 of the District's General Fund. This fund is used to pay for Evergreen's day-to-day expenses, including: special education services, curriculum resources/textbooks, student programs, teachers and staff salaries, building utilities, transportation, and supplies. Evergreen's largest expenditure is personnel costs followed by operating expenses. This renewal tax does not tax social security income.

The General Fund does not pay for food services, athletics, debt services, permanent improvement projects, or student scholarships; these areas have separate funds and separate sources of revenue that cannot be combined.

## GRANT RECIPIENT

Evergreen Local Schools is excited to announce it has recently been awarded a \$146,770.00 Healthy Meals Incentives Grant for small or rural food authorities. Evergreen is one of 264 school districts across 44 states and one of 12 school districts in Ohio to receive this award. The funding for this grant is provided by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service.



The Healthy Meals Incentives Grant is a competitive grant created to support schools in improving the nutritional quality of their meals and modernizing their operations. This grant will be used to purchase new, updated equipment and supplies, professional development for kitchen staff, nutrition education, and food for recipe testing. Additionally, as part of the grant, Evergreen will partner with local farmers on farm-to-table and educational opportunities.

"Students in every community deserve access to healthy and nutritious meals," said USDA Deputy Secretary Xochitl Torres Small. "With these funds, school districts will be able to provide more nutritious meals which will help students succeed in the classroom and beyond," she added.

**ELECTION DAY IS NOVEMBER 7, 2023**



WELCOME NEW VIKINGS!



*Standing, L to R: Jeff Youtzy, Thomas Polachek, Danielle Boger, Martin Nichols, Sarah Friess, John Echelbarger, Amber Hansel, Bryce Bailey, and Charlotte Seegert. Seated: Jessica Reighard, Katrina Specht, Moira Ruplinger, Tori Gauthier, Lindsay Skowron, and Jennifer Hoffman.*

**Jeff Youtzy**  
EES Paraprofessional

**Thomas Polachek**  
EES PE Teacher

**Danielle Boger**  
EES Intervention Specialist

**Martin Nichols**  
EMS English/Language Arts Teacher

**Sarah Friess**  
EHS Art Teacher

**John Echelbarger**  
Technology Coordinator

**Amber Hansel**  
Kindergarten Teacher

**Bryce Bailey**  
Fifth Grade Teacher

**Charlotte Seegert**  
EES Paraprofessional

**Jessica Reighard**  
Preschool Teacher

**Katrina Specht**  
Preschool Teacher

**Moira Ruplinger**  
Fifth Grade Teacher

**Tori Gauthier**  
EMS Secretary

**Lindsay Skowron**  
EMS Counselor

**Jennifer Hoffman**  
EHS/EMS Intervention Specialist

MORE NEW VIKINGS



**Matt Saeger**  
Bus Driver

**Rose Bruno**  
▼ Gifted Teacher



**Scott Westbrook**  
EES Paraprofessional

**Amy Heurman**  
▼ EHS Cook



FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



By Eric J. Smola,  
Superintendent

Dear Evergreen  
Community,

The beginning of  
the 2023-2024  
school year is off

to a great start. We are always excited to have our students back in the buildings and learning. This edition of the *Viking Navigator* highlights some of the many students, groups, and activities that make Evergreen a special place to learn, live, and grow.

Our staff is committed to providing our students with a safe and opportunity-filled education. This year we have added additional security measures and have a full-scale emergency drill planned. We firmly believe being prepared is better than being in a reactive situation.

Educational opportunities are not just for our students. Please join our support organizations, take advantage of volunteer opportunities, support our athletic teams, attend our art and musical performances, and participate in our community events. Whether you have a child in school or not, you can make a difference in our students' lives. We appreciate your involvement and want you to be part of our Viking family.

Election Day is November 7, 2023 and it is an important day for the future of Evergreen Local Schools. Please take time to vote. Thank you.

EVERGREEN LOCAL  
SCHOOLS WEBSITE

[evgvikings.org](http://evgvikings.org)

BOE CANDIDATES - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

**Nora Kiefer**

*What experiences or skills have prepared you to serve as a BOE member?*

I have been on the Evergreen Board of Education for the past 8 years, 6 of which I have had the pleasure of serving as board president. The students and the quality of their educational experience has and always will be my number one priority. While serving on the BOE, I've completed multiple leadership seminars, attended the Ohio Board of Education conference for the past 7 years, and have been a member of the Ohio Board of Education for 4 years. While living in the Evergreen community my entire life, I feel I have a great understanding of how our community works and what is expected of our community. Growing up a Viking has shaped who I am as a person, and I can see the same positive aspects happening within my own children each and every day. This is why I promise to build on the Viking tradition, not to lose focus on excellence, while cultivating our future Vikings.

**Zach Murry**

*What experiences or skills have prepared you to serve as a BOE member?*

In my practice, I regularly represent clients in business, employment, and constitutional law matters. I have repeatedly brought all of that experience to bear during my first term representing the Evergreen Local School District. My experience prepared me to help the district navigate through the COVID pandemic while maintaining in-person instruction. My experience has also enabled me to improve the financial health of the district through sound oversight and the aggressive pursuit of grants and other funding sources to provide additional resources for our students.

**Rusty Carr**

*What experiences or skills have prepared you to serve as a BOE member?*

I have worked in customer service for 21 years with the same employer. I have coached many different youth sports which has given me the chance to interact with Evergreen families often. I have worked for the school system as a boys basketball bookkeeper for over 25 years. In addition, I was vice-president of the Evergreen Youth Association (EYA) and a board member of the Chris Miller Evergreen Athletic Boosters Golf Outing in which I was in charge of going to businesses getting donations and talking to business owners.

NEW SAFETY UPGRADES

Over the summer, new safety upgrades were installed across Evergreen's campus in order to strengthen campus security for students, staff, and visitors. These improvements were made possible through various grants.

**Building Entry - Raptor**

Part of keeping students and staff safe is knowing who is in the buildings at all times. Raptor has been installed in all three buildings which screens visitors, contractors, and volunteers as they enter the main doors. Visitors must present their driver's license to be scanned into Raptor which searches for comparisons with a national registered sex offender database. Once entry is approved, a badge is issued that identifies the visitor, the date, and the purpose of the visit.



▲ Julie Weber, visitor, using Raptor

**Vape Detectors - HALO Sensors**

All student restrooms and locker rooms in both the high school and middle school have been fitted with vape detectors known as HALO sensors. Utilizing the latest in smart technology, HALO adds a layer of security in places not covered by traditional surveillance cameras in unsupervised areas. HALO sensors detect environmental changes produced by vape and vape with THC. When substances are detected, violators will be dealt with accordingly.

**911 Inform**

911 Inform is a notification and emergency management program that provides school officials and emergency responders with state-of-the-art tools to effectively address any crisis situation that may arise anywhere on the Evergreen campus. The system saves valuable response time while allowing the administration to instantly know the who, what, where, and when of any emergency. Evergreen Local Schools is the first school in northwest Ohio to implement this mass communication system.

COMMUNITY WELCOME!



**Veterans Day Program**

All are welcome to attend this year's Veterans Day Program on Friday, November 10, 2023. The event will begin at 9:00 am in the Evergreen High School gymnasium and will include guest speakers, music, tributes and presentations. The District's students in grades 3-12 are looking forward to hosting this special day of honor.



## EHS MUSICAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Get into the holiday spirit this year by attending Evergreen High School's musical production of *Elf*. Performances are November 17, 18 and 19. The story is centered on Buddy, a young orphan, who mistakenly crawls into Santa's bag and is transported to the North Pole. Raised as an enormous-sized elf, Buddy must face the truth of his human existence. For an additional cost, musical goers can take part in extra festivities before the Saturday morning performance. Tickets go on sale October 30 on the District's website at [evgvikings.org](http://evgvikings.org). Also, for the early holiday shoppers, bring your unwrapped gifts before ANY show performance and Santa's helpers will wrap them for you while you enjoy the show for a donation.



### SHOWTIMES:

- Friday, Nov. 17 at 7:00 pm
- Saturday, Nov. 18 at 10:30 am
- Sunday, Nov. 19 at 2:00 pm

### TICKET PRICES:

- Adult - \$12
- Students & Sr. Citizens - \$9
- 4 years and younger - Free

### Breakfast with Buddy Add-On

\$15 per child, Nov. 18 at 8:30 am, EMS Cafeteria  
 Before the Saturday morning performance, children are invited to come enjoy breakfast with Buddy, create a holiday picture frame, take a photo with Buddy, and decorate a cookie during intermission. Breakfast includes muffins, donuts, and fruit. (No additional cost for accompanying adults.) Show tickets sold separately.

## HAPPY RETIREMENT



Ellen Przybylski, EES art teacher, completed her 34th year as an educator all while serving Evergreen Local Schools. "I am going to miss the great staff, supportive community members, and students the most," she said. "I have spent more than half of my life here at Evergreen as a student, a parent, and a visual arts educator; everyone has become part of my family," she added. Her visual arts career has included the following roles: commercial and free lance artist, administrative assistant, art educator, visual arts integrated math/art specialist for the Toledo Museum of Art, representative to the State Department, visual arts educator for international relations in Tanzania Africa, and visual arts educator for the Department of Natural Resources. Upon retirement, she is looking forward to her full-time role as grandma and artist.

## FULL-SCALE SAFETY DRILL

On November 17, 2023, Evergreen Schools will conduct a full-scale emergency preparedness drill. The exercise is coordinated with Fulton County Emergency Management and first responders. Schools are required to conduct a full-scale preparedness drill every three years in the state of Ohio. Please be advised that emergency personnel and vehicles will be on campus surrounding the school buildings on November 17. Please do not panic! Reminders will be posted to social media as the event gets closer.



## STATE REPORT CARD



The Ohio Department of Education recently released the local report cards for both schools and districts. Ratings of 1 to 5 stars, in half-star increments, were awarded based on the following components: Overall, Achievement, Progress, Early Literacy, Gap Closing and Graduation.

Evergreen Local Schools received an overall rating of 4 stars. EES received 4.5 stars. EMS received 3.5 stars. EHS received 4.5 stars.

According to Dr. Dolores Swineford, assistant superintendent and curriculum director, "It is important to remember that the local report cards are only one part of our District's educational journey. It does not reflect the hard work and progress taking place daily in our buildings."

Based on the data, the following strengths and areas of concerns have been identified. Evergreen will focus on student supports to address the areas of concern.

### STRENGTHS

- Progress and Gap Closing components improved
- Gifted indicator points increased

### CONCERNS

- Decrease shown in Early Literacy component
- Chronic absenteeism increased
- Four & five-year graduation rates decreased

### ACTION STEPS

- Implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)
- Professional Development focusing on student supports
- New math curriculum purchased for grades K-12

## EMS ARTISTS OF THE WEEK

The following EMS students have been named Artist of the Week for exemplary effort and creativity.



▲ Ella Ashenfelter, Surrealism Oil Pastel



▲ Allison Miller, Surrealism Oil Pastel



▲ Emma Dye, Cityscape

## SUBSTITUTES NEEDED!

- Bus drivers, aides and cafeteria workers are needed asap
- No experience necessary
- Training is provided
- Great opportunity to have the same schedule as the students
- Rewarding part-time work

Information & applications are on the District website under the "Employment Opportunities" icon.

## CHOIR STUDENT SELECTED

Congratulations Michael Wheeler, gr. 12, for being named an OMEA All-State Choir member! Students from all over the state auditioned for this prestigious opportunity. The choir will perform in Columbus this February. This is Wheeler's second year to be invited to perform in the All-State Choir. Michael was also selected by audition and performed in the All-Ohio State Fair Youth Choir (2.5 weeks and 80 performances) and the Ohio Choral Directors Association's High School Honor Choir this summer.



## CONGRATULATIONS SMOLA

Ella Smola, gr. 11, has been named as one of 16 Ohio high school students named to Governor Mike DeWine's Ohio Student Safety Advisory Council. She will work with the Ohio School Safety Center (OSSC) to identify school safety concerns and come up with solutions to address them. According to DeWine, one of the advisory council's main goals is to involve students in policy making because they know better than anyone what is happening at school.



## AMERICAN LEGION CONTEST

The 2024 American Legion Oratorical Contest is now open to students in grades 9-12. It's designed for students to develop a deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution. Scholarship money is awarded at different levels. Competition begins at the post level and advances to state and national contests. Adam Smith, gr. 12, participated in the contest last year and won second place in the state competition, the highest any EHS student has ever placed. Adam received more than \$1,500 in scholarship money for his accomplishments. Interested students can see Mr. Blanchong for details regarding this year's contest.



## IN LOVING MEMORY

New library furniture and books were recently purchased for EES with memorial donations given in honor of Kathryn "Kitty" Donahue. Kitty worked in the elementary libraries for almost 25 years traveling between the Lyons and Fulton elementary buildings. She loved books and passed on her love of reading to the children of the District. Kitty passed away on September 23, 2022 and her family would like to thank everyone who donated to her memorial.





## SPECIAL VISITOR

Jay Berschback, meteorologist from 13abc Action News, recently visited with the third grade. He discussed different types of weather and the seasons while explaining the concepts with fun demonstrations and examples. His visit even made a news clip on 13abc that evening.



## NWOAL CHAMPIONS!

Congratulations to the boys varsity soccer team who won the NWOAL Championship title outright this season. The boys soccer program is only in its fifth year and is coached by Dave Skoczyn. Go Vikings!



## FFA RECEIVES COMMUNITY GRANT

The Evergreen FFA has been awarded a Chapter Success Grant designed to help the local community. Evergreen was one of 14 Ohio chapters to be awarded the grant to support community projects within the District. The funding will allow the Evergreen FFA chapter to provide a minimum of 25 Thanksgiving meals for families in the Evergreen Local School District this fall. Contact Alexis Howell, advisor, at [AHowell@evgvikings.org](mailto:AHowell@evgvikings.org) to nominate a family in need no later than November 13.

**2023-2024 FFA Officer Team**  
 (L to R): B.Bettinger (Chaplin)  
 A.Natter (Historian)  
 R.Studenka (Parliamentarian)  
 R. VanWormer (Sentinel)  
 J.Campbell (Student Advisor)  
 A.Campbell (Reporter)  
 A.Bettinger (Treasurer)  
 C.Wyse (Secretary)  
 T.Johnson (Vice President)  
 M.Gleckler (President)



## HOMECOMING 2023

Homecoming festivities included Spirit Week and class competitions followed by the home football game against Wauseon. The EHS Homecoming Court was presented during the EHS pep-assembly where the senior king and queen, E. Hernandez and L. Nash were announced. Attendants were: (gr. 9) J. Huffman, L. Overfield, L. Valentine, and A. Gillen, (gr. 10) T. Manz, E. Nash, J. Hahn, and B. Bolger, (gr. 11) S. Rafferty, T. Johnson, B. Setmire, and A. Fox, (gr. 12) L. Nash, M. Chamberlin, A. Kwiatkowski, E. Hernandez, R. Dunbar, and E. Kiefer.



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

### Meet the Candidates Night

Hosted by the AP Gov. Class

2 BOE seats, 3 candidates

November 1 at 7:00 pm, EHS gym

### Powderpuff Football Game

Hosted by the Junior Class

November 3 at 6:00 pm, Pifer Field

### Election Day

November 7

### Veterans Day Program

November 10 at 9:00 am at EHS

### Full-Scale Safety Drill

Evergreen Campus

November 17

### EHS Musical, *Elf*

November 17, 18 & 19 at EMS

Tickets on sale October 30

### Thanksgiving Break

No School

November 22-27

### EES Tree Lighting Ceremony

November 28 at 7:00 pm

### EMS Choir & Band Concert

December 18 at 6:00 pm, EMS gym

### EHS Choir & Band Concert

December 18 at 7:30 pm, EMS gym

### Last Day of 2nd Quarter

December 22

### Holiday Break for Students

December 25 - January 2

Classes resume January 3



## WEIGHT ROOM OPEN



The Evergreen weight room is now open to the public every Saturday morning from 8:00-9:30 am.

## CURB APPEAL

When the EHS parking lot is empty, take a few minutes to drive through it and check out the senior parking spaces. For a small fee, seniors reserved and painted a parking space to use during the school day. All proceeds benefitted the EHS Student Council.



## FFA FRUIT & NUT SALE

Evergreen's FFA Fruit and Nut Sale is going on now. Also included in the sale are BBQ sauces, beef sticks, jerky, cheese, candles, honey, and maple syrup. All funds raised help FFA members compete in contests and conduct chapter activities. Hurry, order ends November 7. To order, contact Alexis Howell, advisor, at [AHowell@evgvikings.org](mailto:AHowell@evgvikings.org).



## C.A.S.T

### CARING & SHARING TOGETHER

C.A.S.T is a local food pantry available to Evergreen community members. It is located in Metamora at 116 E. Main Street, between the Village office and the Metamora State Bank. The pantry is open the third Wednesday of the month from 9:00 am-noon. If community members need some assistance with groceries, this option is available. Food distribution is located at the backside of the building. Park in the lot behind the bank.

*Email [JConrad@evgvikings.org](mailto:JConrad@evgvikings.org) to have your event added to the Community Bulletin Board.*

## The Community Bulletin Board

- Evergreen Board of Education Meetings: November 20 & December 18 in the EHS media center. Agendas and summaries can be viewed at [www.evgvikings.org](http://www.evgvikings.org).
- Toledo Holiday Parade in downtown Toledo, with the Evergreen Marching Band, is November 11 at 10:00 am.
- Lourdes University's High School Financial Aid Night for seniors and their parents is November 29 from 6:30-8:00 pm in the Franciscan Center. All students are welcome regardless of which college they choose to attend. The event is free. Topics include filling out FAFSA, types of aid available, and more.
- Evergreen Athletic Boosters' Annual Reverse Raffle is November 18 at Holy Trinity School. Doors open at 4:30 pm. Tickets are \$65 each and includes one entry, dinner, and beverages. Over \$5,000 in cash and prizes will be given away. Contact Amber Mossing at 419-346-6027 for tickets. Proceeds benefit Evergreen athletics.
- Metamora Christmas Parade, with the Evergreen Marching Band, is set for December 3 at 5:30 pm.
- Lyons Christmas Parade, with the Evergreen Marching Band, is December 9 at 5:30 pm.
- Congratulations Step Up Twirling Academy for being crowned International Champions in the Tiny Tot Small division. Also, the group's Tiny Tot Small Pom team earned third place, and their Juvenile Small Dance Twirl team took fifth place. The twirlers are coached by Jamie Harris and Lindsay Vance. The competition was sponsored by Twirling Unlimited.
- The next MVP (Mini Viking Parents) meetings are November 13 & December 11 at 6:00 pm in the EES library. MVP encompasses both the EES and EMS.



**Evergreen Local School District**  
14544 County Road 6  
Metamora, OH 43540