



## Welcome to the 2025–2026 School Year at Kalida Local Schools

I am truly honored and excited to be part of Kalida Local Schools and its long-standing Tradition of Excellence. As we begin this new school year, our focus remains clear—every decision and goal will be centered on Student Growth, Student Achievement, and Student Well-Being.

Student well-being includes many areas, and one of the most important is safety. As Mr. Walker explains in his article, and as you can see in the image of our parking lot, there will be some changes this year to increase student safety. The Bus Parking Lot between the Administration Building and the high school will be for bus parking and staff parking only. Parents will not be permitted to park there to drop-off or pick-up students. Details on parent drop-off and pick-up will be provided later in this edition of The Paw Print.

Clear and consistent communication will be a major focus this year. We will be using Facebook more regularly to share weekly updates on events and important announcements. In the coming weeks, we will also roll out a new and improved district website to make finding information easier than ever. Additionally, we are transitioning to a new communication platform, ParentSquare. While Remind will continue to be used for athletics this fall, our goal is to have all communication through ParentSquare as soon as possible. Please take a moment to sign up for ParentSquare so you don't miss any important updates. Details on ParentSquare are provided in this edition.

I also want to extend a warm welcome to our new staff members joining the Wildcat Family this year. We are excited for the knowledge, skills, and energy they bring, and I know they will quickly feel the pride and community spirit that makes Kalida such a special place. I am excited for the year ahead and grateful for the opportunity to work alongside such an outstanding staff, supportive parents, and a community that believes in our students. Together, we will continue to build on our Tradition of Excellence and make this a year to remember. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns.

Here's to a great school year—and as always—Wildcat PRIDE!

~ *Dean Brinkman, Superintendent*

## Welcome Back Mr. Blake Walker



Hello Wildcat community! My name is Blake Walker, and I am honored to be serving as the new Junior High/High School Principal at Kalida. I'm incredibly excited to be back working in Kalida — a place that feels like home and holds a special place in my heart.

My wife, Andrea, and I live in Glandorf with our three wonderful children: Abigail (6), Marcy (4), and Jake (3). As a family, we're thrilled to be part of this close-knit area and are grateful for the warm welcome we've already received.

I look forward to becoming an active part of the Kalida community and working alongside our dedicated staff and supportive families to help our students grow both academically and personally. It's a privilege to return to Kalida and to be part of a school district that values excellence, tradition, and relationships.

Go Wildcats!

~ *Blake Walker, JH/HS Principal*

## Enrollment Numbers

The Kalida Local School welcomes 43 **kindergarten** students into the **Wildcat Pride**. There are 192 students in grades K-4 in the elementary. The middle school and high school, grades 5-12, have 395 students enrolled. Fifteen Kalida students will be attending Vantage Career Center in Van Wert.

## Elementary Grades 1-4 Open House

**August 14th** from 4-5 p.m. Come bring your supplies, meet your teacher, & check out your classroom for the year! Lunch money & book bills can also be paid in the office.

## Elementary Transportation Reminders

Parent drop-off begins at **7:30 a.m.** each day.

**Parent drop-off and pick-up:** For student safety, will take place **ONLY** on North Fourth St. along the school side curb. Afternoon pick-up time is 2:50 p.m.

**BUS ONLY - arrival & dismissal:** will continue to take place by the gym doors on E. Price Street.

# Kalida Local School Staff List 2025-26

## **District Administration**      **419-532-3534**

Dean Brinkman	Superintendent
Michelle Buss	Treasurer
Cheryl Simon	Assistant Treasurer, EMIS Coordinator
Blake Walker	Middle/High School Principal
Kayla Stechschulte	Elementary Principal
Jeremy Okuley	Director of Technology

## **Middle School/High School**      **419-532-3529**

Bev Berheide	Paraprofessional
Jessica Bertucci	Spanish
Tristine Bockrath	HS Science
Brenda Burgei	HS Mathematics
Ashley Buss	Administrative Assistant/ Student Records/Fees
Jeff Clement	H.S. Guidance Counselor
Lachlan Clymer	JH Reading/Language Arts
Kelly Dube	Intervention Specialist
Ashley Ellerbrock	Athletic Dept./ Study Hall Monitor
Gina Erhart	Grade 5/6 Team Teacher
Mitch Gable	Vocational Agriculture
Neil Gerding	HS Social Studies
Beth Grime	JH/HS Science
Molly Haberman	Grade 5/6 Team Teacher
Adam Huber	JH/HS Mathematics/Athletic Director
Stacy Kneuve	Business/Computers/Tech Support
Dale Liebrecht	JH/HS Technology/ Engineering
Jacob Litwiller	Band
Emily Maag	HS Language Arts
Scott Miller	JH/HS Social Studies
Caitlin Morris	Grade 5/6 Team Teacher
Laura Myers	Art
Steve Myers	Grades 5-8 Guidance Counselor
Morgan Schroeder	Intervention Specialist
Robb Schultz	JH Science/Social Studies/JH Phys. Ed
Gracyn Schwieterman	HS Vocal Music
Mary Siefker	Administrative Assistant/Attendance/ ASL Moderator
Wendy Stechschulte	Grade 5/6 Team Teacher
Zoe Stechschulte	HS Mathematics
Melanie Thorbahn	HS Intervention
Blyth Turnwald	Grade 5/6 Team Teacher
Kaylan Unverferth	HS Language Arts
Darla Warnecke	HS Science/ BioMed
Beth Wolke	Psychologist

## **Elementary**      **419-532-3845**

Lauren Birkemeier	Grade 1
Lauren Csukker	Grade 4
Deb Eickholt	Grade 2
Lori Goedde	Paraprofessional
Jenny Goubeaux	Paraprofessional
Darlene Imm	Grade 2
Deb Kahle	Reading Specialist
Taylor Karhoff	Kindergarten
Jill Leis	Kindergarten
Jacob Litwiller	Band
Steve Myers	Elementary Counselor
Bethany Niese	Grade 1
Michele Niese	Grade 4
Jackie Otto	Paraprofessional
Chelsea Recker	Grade 3
Jessica Recker	Grade 3
Paige Sarka	Elementary Intervention
Linda Schmenk	Paraprofessional
Gracyn Schwieterman	Music
Kelly Siefker	Grade 1
Kristen Stechschulte	Physical Education
Andriene Swyers	Library/Tech
Marcia Vennekotter	Administrative Assistant
Natasha Verhoff	Kindergarten
Megan Westenbarger	Speech

## **Maintenance/Custodial**

Dan Bellmann	Head of Maintenance
Gary Vorst	Elementary Custodian
Cody Wagner	HS Custodian

## **Cafeteria**

Sarah Neidert	District Cafeteria Manager
Jenny Goubeaux	Elementary Lead Cook
Mandy Anspach	HS Cook/Cashier
Carolyn Miller	HS Cook
Jenna Miller	HS Cook
Sarah Bendele	Elementary Cook
Sue Wehri	Elementary Cook

## **Transportation**

Mary Siefker– Assistant Transportation Supervisor,  
Bev Berheide, Carl Luersman, Linda Schmenk,  
Andrew Wehri, Melissa Wurst

## Welcome to Kalida Local Schools

### Miss Jessica Bertucci

¡Hola! My name is Jessica Bertucci. I'm the new Spanish teacher. A bit about me- I'm the eldest in my family and have four brothers. I grew up doing judo and still love it! Originally, I'm from Massachusetts, but have lived and taught in a few places, including Findlay. I went to school in Kentucky, lived in Mexico before COVID and got to realize a dream when I studied in Spain this past summer. I love teaching languages, traveling and cooking new things. I am excited for the school year and feel blessed to be a part of Kalida!

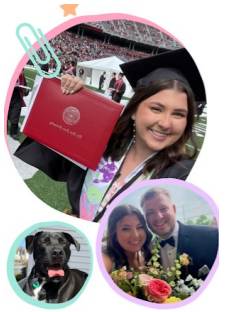


### Mrs. Ashley Ellerbrock

I am a 2006 graduate of Columbus Grove High School. My husband, Brad, and I have been married for almost 15 years and live in Glandorf with our two children: our son, Grady, who will be in the 5th grade, and our daughter, Hayden, who will be in the 3rd grade. I previously worked for Dan G. Wilker, D.D.S., and Will M. Buettner, D.D.S. I'm excited to now be part of the Kalida community and look forward to meeting students, staff, and families and contributing wherever I can throughout the school year.

### Mrs. Taylor Karhoff

I will be teaching kindergarten this fall. I live in Ottawa with my husband, Riley, and dog, Winston. In May I graduated from The Ohio State University. In my free time I enjoy baking and spending time outdoors with family and friends. I am very excited to begin my first year teaching at Kalida Elementary, where I student taught last year. I am looking forward to officially becoming a Kalida Wildcat and hope everyone has a great school year!



### Mrs. Laura Myers

I am a 2003 graduate of Anthony Wayne High School and earned my degree in Art Education from Bluffton University in 2007, where I also met my husband, Steve. We married in 2010 and have made our home in Ottawa, Ohio. Over the years, our household has included a variety of beloved animals—dogs, cats, chickens, ducks, and goats. We currently share our home with a gentle English Mastiff named Dali, named after the surrealist artist Salvador Dalí.

I began my teaching career at Ottawa-Glandorf High School, where I have been inspiring students through art since 2015. A dedicated artist and photographer, I illustrated the children's book *Chef Stinky's Diner*, written by my sister, and I have recently started Laura Myers Photography LLC. My photography has also been accepted into and sold through the ArtSpace/Lima Professional Show. I continue to pursue my passion for creativity both in and out of the classroom. I am very excited to start teaching at Kalida High School and working with the students, staff, and community!

### Mrs. Jackie Otto

I grew up in the village of Republic Ohio in Seneca County. In 1994 I married Jim and moved to support him as a Marine. During the 31 years away, we lived in three different states and raised our three children. Our oldest child, Ashley, is a Doctor in the Navy station in Norfolk, VA as Chief Resident. Allison, our second child, is living in Tiffin, Ohio working at the School of Opportunity. Our youngest, Tim, is going to college at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, VA. The last 16 years in Virginia I worked in special education as a paraprofessional with students with autism.

Jim and I moved back to Jim's Childhood home on State Route 694 in Cloverdale this past May, where we plan to retire. Some of my hobbies include traveling, hiking and sewing. I love visiting and exploring national parks when I can.

I feel very Blessed to have the opportunity to join Kalida elementary in Special Education. I look forward to working with everyone and the students.



### Miss Zoe Stechschulte

I am from Columbus Grove and a recent graduate from Bowling Green State University with a bachelors in AYA Math Education, grades 7-12. I am so grateful for the opportunity to teach Algebra I and Algebra II at KHS. Many of you may know my older sister, Gracyn Schwieterman, as she has been the music teacher at Kalida for the past three years. I look forward to motivating and supporting the students' needs as I have seen my sister do everyday the past few years. I am so excited to see what this year will bring and look forward to joining the community!



# New Arrival and Dismissal Procedures at Kalida High School Building

## MORNING DROP-OFF

- ♦ Drop-off at the front doors of the high school building.
- ♦ **NO** student-drop off in the Bus Parking Lot.
- ♦ ***All students that are walking or riding bikes through the bus parking lot***, please stay close to the soccer field fence and continue along that route until you reach the sidewalk that runs in front of the bus parking lines. Follow sidewalk to the front doors of the building.

## AFTERNOON DISMISSAL

- ♦ **No Students** will be permitted to park by the high school soccer field school days from 7:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.
- ♦ The parking lot between the gym and administrative building will be for **buses only**.
- ♦ **ALL parent pick-up** will be in the **black top parking lot** off third street. Parents will no longer pick-up students by the school building, Administration building or in the Bus Parking lot.

- At 3:00 p.m. a staff member will walk all ***parent pick-up students in the 5th—8th grade*** from the school

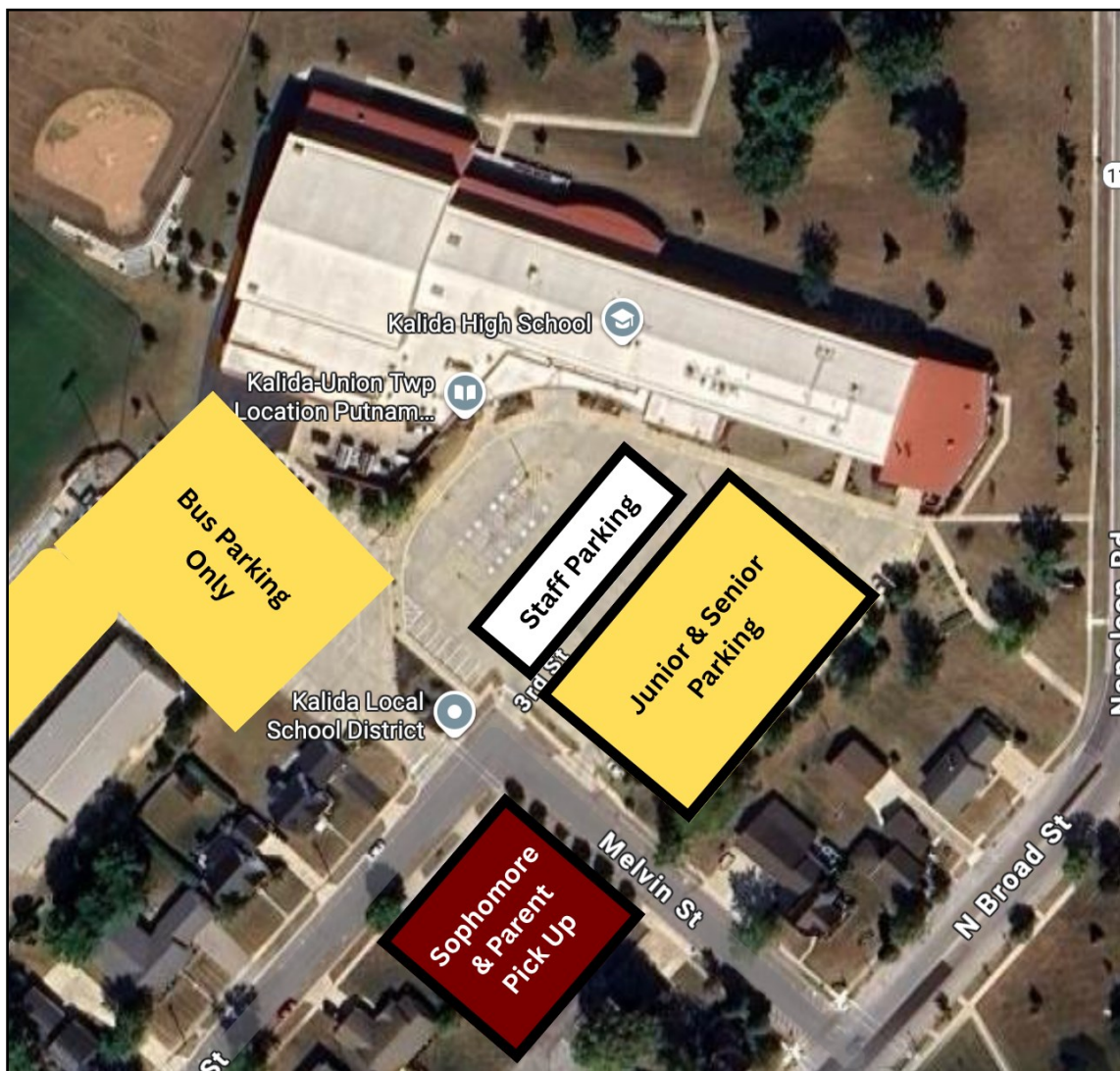
building out to the black top parking lot.

- At 3:05 p.m. all remaining students will be released, including **9th-12th parent pick-up students**.

- ♦ All **Sophomore student parking** will be in the **blacktop parking lot** off third street.
- ♦ **Junior and Senior parking** along with staff parking will remain the same.
- ♦ Reminder: All **yellow striped parking spots** in the high school lot are for ***staff parking only***.
- ♦ All 5th-8th Grade students that are being picked up by parents will be released at 3:00 p.m.
- ♦ All other students in the 5th-12th grades will be released at the normal time — 3:05 p.m.

Thank you for your cooperation with our new Arrival/Dismissal procedures. Please share this with any family members that will be dropping off or picking up your student from the high school building. We understand that it will take some time for everyone to get accustomed to the new arrival and dismissal procedures. We feel these changes will make the dismissal process safer for all students.

Thank you!



## New Text and or Email Notification System

We're excited to share that our district is transitioning from Remind to ParentSquare for all school communication.

ParentSquare brings together district, school, and classroom communication in one place—making it easier for you to stay informed and connected with Kalida Schools.

With ParentSquare, you can:

- Receive updates via email, text, and the free mobile app
- View calendar events and announcements
- Send and receive messages
- Sign forms, schedule conferences, and more—all in your preferred language



ParentSquare

### Registration and Login Information


#### ***For Students, Parents, and Guardians of students:***

You should have received an email for a link. You can also select the ParentSquare Link on the district website, under the Resources Tab. The [Getting Started One-Pager](#) will help you learn more. You'll notice many features you're familiar with from Remind, as well as new capabilities that support stronger communication with your child's school. If you have questions, visit the Help section by clicking the question mark at the top of the website or the triple bar icon in the app. These will take you to resources such as the help articles, which include answers to frequently asked questions.

#### ***For Community Members (without students in the Local School District):***

If you are not a parent/student or staff member of Kalida Local Schools, you can sign up for general alerts (Weather and Athletics). You can access ParentSquare Link on the districts website, under the Resources Tab select **"ParentSquare (Alerts) Remind replacement"** then the **"Community Group sign-up Form"**.

Thank you for your continued support.

 PaySchools Central allows you to monitor the student's lunch purchases & balance, limit student lunch spending, add money to their lunch account, transfer money between siblings, sign up for low account text alerts and enter an online Free & Reduced-Price Meal Application. If you have not already created an account with [www.payschoolscentral.com](http://www.payschoolscentral.com), we encourage you to create your account.

**\*\* You may also pay for your student fees through PaySchool Central, but there are Convenience and Processing Fees that will be charge. The following fees will be incurred for each PaySchools Central Transaction:**

- Paid with Checking-account transfer: \$1.25
- Paid with debit or credit card: 3.25%

***You may continue to send cash or check to the school in an envelope with the student's name, ID/lunch account number and amount enclosed for your child's lunch account and student bookbill/fees to avoid the PaySchool Central processing fees.***

### **Free and Reduced Meal Applications**

With the implementation of PaySchools Central, we have online Free and Reduced Meal Applications. If you have not already created a PaySchools Central account, please follow the directions above to create your account and apply. Those eligible for free/reduced lunches must re-apply. Once you complete the application you will receive immediate notification if you qualify for the program. If you have any questions, contact Mrs. Mary Siefker at 419-532-3543.

### ***FINAL FORMS***

Please log in to FinalForms to complete and sign all forms for 25-26 school year. There have

been a few last minute additions to the FinalForms. Please log-in and check that all forms are completed and signed **as soon as possible**.

Students in grades 7-12 will log into final forms with their school email address and password to complete and sign their forms. Additional information is located on the school district's website, under the Resources Tab: <http://kalidaschools.org>

### **2025-2026 Cafeteria Prices**

Prices are the following:

<b>Elementary lunches (K-4)</b>	<b>\$2.50</b>
<b>JH/HS lunches (5-12)</b>	<b>\$2.65</b>
* Grades 7-12 can substitute the entrée for a salad	
* All students may substitute the entrée for a Sub or peanut butter sandwich.	
<b>Ala Carte (5-12)</b>	<b>\$2.00</b>
<b>Adult lunches</b>	<b>\$4.00</b>
<b>Extra milk-students</b>	<b>\$.50</b>

### **Substitute Bus Route/Extra-Curricular Driver Opening**

Kalida Local Schools is looking to add Bus Drivers to their Substitute Route/Extra-Curricular Driver listing. Qualified candidates must hold or be eligible to achieve the valid and appropriate licensure with the Ohio Department of Education & Workforce (ODEW). If interested please contact Dean Brinkman, Superintendent, [ka\\_supt@kalidaschools.org](mailto:ka_supt@kalidaschools.org) or call 419-532-3534 to apply or inquire about information on how to obtain your Class B CDL with School Bus/Passenger Endorsement.



**Superintendent Dean Brinkman** 419-532-3534  
**High School Principal Blake Walker** 419-532-3529  
**Elementary Principal Kayla Stechschulte** 419-532-3845  
**Treasurer Michelle Buss** 419-532-3556

**School Board Meetings**  
 Second Wednesday 7:00 PM  
 Kalida School Board Room

**School Board Members**  
 Brent Helmke, President  
 Greg von der Embse, Vice President  
 Brad Niemeyer, Emily Peck, Craig Schmenk

Kalida Board of Education  
 Box 269  
 Kalida, OH 45853  
*Address Service Requested*

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## Music Booster Drawings

### June Winners

#### **\$50 Winners**

Denny Turnwald	Rodney Dickman
Mindy Houck	Becky (Kyle) Unverferth
Dean Strauer	Lawson Brinkman

### July Winners

#### **\$50 Winners**

Jill Ricker	Wade & Jen Wortkoetter
Chloe Miller	Courtney Heitmeyer
Dick Gerdeman	Mallory Ferris

### August Winners

#### **\$50 Winner**

Kelly Schlorst	Joyce Wurth
Lois Fischer	Samantha & Brian Recker
Bentley Wasson	Alison Niemeyer

## 2025-26 School Calendar

Aug. 14/18, 2025—Teacher Workday/PD  
 8/19/25—First Day for Students  
 9/1/25—Labor Day—*No School*  
 9/8/25—Staff Development—*2 hour Delay*  
 9/30/25—Homecoming Soccer Game  
 10/11/25—Homecoming Dance  
 10/21/25—End of First Nine Weeks  
 10/24/25—Fall Break—*No School*  
 11/20/25—Parent Teacher Conferences 5-8 p.m.  
 11/24/25—Professional Development 8 a.m.—3 p.m.—*No School*  
 11/24/25—Parent Teacher Conferences 3:30-7:30 p.m.—*No School*  
 11/25/25 through 11/28/25—Thanksgiving Break—*No School*  
 12/19/25—*2-Hour Early Dismissal—Christmas Break Begins*  
 1/5/26—Classes Resume  
 1/13/26—End of Second Nine Weeks  
 1/19/26—Martin Luther King Day—*No School*  
 2/13/26—County-Wide Professional Development—*No School*  
 2/16/26—Presidents' Day—*No School*  
 3/19/26—End of Third Nine Weeks  
 4/3/26 through 4/6/26—Spring Break—*No School*  
 4/7/26—Classes Resume  
 5/2/26—Prom  
 5/21/26—Last Day for Students—*2 Hour Early Dismissal*  
 5/22/26—Teacher Workday  
 5/24/26—Graduation—Class of 2026—2:00 p.m.  
 5/25/26—Memorial Day

*Possible Make-Up Day: Monday, April 6*

## Kalida Music Boosters 50/50 Club

### Tickets on Sale through August 23rd

Tickets are \$30 and you are entered for a chance to win five monthly drawings of \$50 and several more chances with special drawings throughout the year. Please contact a band or choir student to get yours today. If you don't know of a band or choir student please reach out to Emily Wehri 419-796-9022 or Kathy Lammers 419-890-6564 to get one.

## Blood Mobile



Thank you to all who donated blood on July 23. We collected 79 units.

**The next blood drive is October 30, 2025 from 12 p.m.—6 p.m. at Kalida High School gym.**

Appointments are highly recommended. To schedule an appointment: (below are scheduling options)

- log into your American Red Cross app
- go to [redcrossblood.org](https://redcrossblood.org)
- call 1-800-REDCROSS

## 7th & 12th Grade Vaccination Requirements

**Prior to August 19, 2025**, 7th graders are required to have both the Tdap and Meningitis (MCV4) vaccine and 12th graders are required to have two doses of the Meningitis vaccine. Upload the shot record into FinalForms OR drop off a copy at the school.

## Kalida All Sports Passes

Kalida Schools are selling the Sports Passes in the Superintendent's office during the week from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

### Family All-Sports Pass

**Adult \$125, Student/Sr. Citizen \$90, Family \$350**

### Fall Only Pass

**Adult \$70 or Student/Sr. Citizen \$50**

### Winter Only Pass

**Adult \$80 or Student/Sr. Citizen \$50**

Varsity ticket prices will be \$7 for adults and \$5 for students for soccer, volleyball and girls' basketball games.

JH and Freshmen games price are \$5.