



FOOD FOX

Aramark mascot visits students

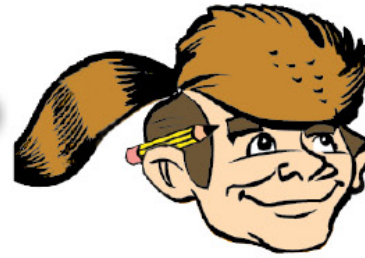
SEE PAGE 4

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THE ELYRIA SCHOOLS Pioneer



Press

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WWW.ELYRIASCHOOLS.ORG

Crestwood's four-legged comfort keeper: Griffen

Amy Higgins

Communications director

The newest member of the Crestwood Elementary team was brought in to accomplish a task that we've all been told is impossible.

His job? Make everyone happy.

He's the quintessential "people pleaser," and he doesn't even say a word.

This fellow doesn't look for payment either. Well, maybe just a scratch behind the ears and a few dehydrated apple slices.

He's Griffen, a 1-year-old Bernese Mountain Dog whose first day on the job came last November when owner and Crestwood teacher, Jen Martinez, brought him onboard.

The sights and smells of Crestwood may have been all new to Griffen, but for those awaiting his arrival, he was finally home.

Even before Griffen joined the Martinez family, Jen — who'd recently lost a family pet of the same breed — had big plans for him.

"I wanted to share the joy that my first Bernese Mountain Dog brought to me and my family with the kids here at Crestwood because they are my extended family," she said. "The students hear a lot about my family and a lot about my animals through what we do in class and in different lessons."

See **COMFORT**, 8



PHOTO PROVIDED

Crestwood Teacher Jen Martinez accepts a hand-painted portrait of her dog Griffen from student Gabby Wise and her uncle, Jody Juhasz (the artist). Griffen is a trained comfort dog that visits Crestwood Elementary School every week. Adored by students, staff and parents, Griffen has settled right into the Crestwood crew.



ANN SCHLOSS

Count yourself in

At the start of every school day — no matter what the school, or the grade level — there is one action that precedes all others.

Taking attendance.

It isn't just inherently part of the day's events — it is the event that makes everything after it possible.

If you don't show, you can't grow.

We take attendance for regulatory reasons, of course, but most importantly we take daily attendance because we care about our students and their education, and we miss them when they're absent.

Missing school means missing any number of daily lessons, programs and services that directly impact a student's academic, social and emotional experiences and welfare.

In essence, being present and accounted for matters above all else — not just in school, but in the broader sense of our community, too.

Over the next couple of months, the United States government will take the attendance of the nation.

Census Day is April 1.

Now and over the next couple of months, census takers will hit the pavement, knocking on doors in an attempt to count every citizen of the United States.

The United States Census takes

See **COUNT**, 7

Elaine Seguin joins Board of Education

Amy Higgins

Communications director

The Elyria Board of Education welcomed its newest member at the kickoff meeting in 2020.

Elaine Seguin, a lifelong Elyria Township resident, officially took her board seat at the Jan. 8 meeting.

Also, the board welcomed returning members Greg Elek and Michael Gebhardt, who have served since 2013 and 2015, respectively. They were re-elected by voters in November 2019, when newest member Seguin was also elected.

Seguin replaced former member Kevin Brubaker. The other sitting board members are Annie Carstarphen, who joined in 2014, and Jim Backs, who joined in 2015.

Elek, Gebhardt and Seguin



Seguin

are now serving four-year terms through Dec. 31, 2024.

The three have deep roots in the city and township and in Elyria Schools.

As youngsters they were students in this district — and they've also seen their own children attend and graduate from Elyria Schools.

Seguin is an alumna of Crestwood Elementary School, Westwood Middle School and Elyria West High School.

She currently resides in the township with husband, Phil, and children, Ruthie and Nathan.

"I've actually lived my entire life on Adelbert Street, very near the Westwood/Crestwood school

complex," Seguin said. "I would like to think that I bloomed where I was planted."

Her path was clearly by design.

"My decision to raise a family in Elyria Township was very intentional and influenced by proximity to my family — and fond memories of growing up in Elyria Township and in the Elyria school system," Seguin said.

Her two children have attended Elyria Schools their entire academic career thus far.

"They attended Crestwood Elementary for six years, where I was active in the Crestwood PTA, and they currently attend Westwood Middle School," Seguin said.

"We have been pleased with our children's education to this point," she said.

Her husband, an alumnus of St. Jude School and Elyria Catholic

High School, has spent the majority of his life in Elyria and Elyria Township.

Her history with Elyria Schools and her deep affection for the district and the community she grew up in inspired her to join the Elyria Board of Education.

"My husband and I value education," she said. "I hope to be an advocate for both the education community and the taxpayers in making decisions that keep our school system healthy, strong and efficient."

Seguin is also eager to help usher in the new school buildings.

"I want to help push the current construction projects with the elementary and middle schools over the finish line and see the long-term vision of the district's plan for modernization of its buildings come to full fruition,"

she said. "I also want to see the district continue to perform efficiently and effectively."

Seguin nostalgically recalls walking the halls of Crestwood Elementary School with her kindergarten-aged children, just as she had years earlier as a kindergarten herself — traversing those same halls with her mother.

"It brought back many memories," she said. "It's hard to explain the feeling you have entering a school that you attended from your childhood now as a parent, but it was a very comforting and fulfilling experience."

She hopes to pass that sort of experience along to other moms and dads in Elyria.

"I am very much looking forward to giving something back to an institution that has been a significant part of my life," she said.

MAKER MANIA

Amy Higgins

Communications director

Learning and conceptualization take any number of forms in the makerspaces of Elyria Schools. But these eclectic imagination spaces would not be possible without the robust support of funders like the Nordson Corporation.

In February, Nordson Corporation announced it will invest \$150,000 in new equipment and supplies to outfit the brand new makerspaces of Ely Elementary, Hamilton Elementary and Northwood Campus set to open in the fall of 2020.

"Over the past couple of years, Elyria City School District has been working hard to increase its STEAM offerings, both in and out of school, for PK-12 students," said Kathy Koepf, Elyria Schools professional development director. "As we move to the new schools, we are dedicated to increasing those opportunities even more.

"Our goal is to provide open-ended technology exploration and experiences for all students, regardless of their age or ability, and to provide state-of-the-art

equipment to ensure students develop in-demand skills that are valuable and transportable across all industries."

Educators are preparing students for a world that hasn't yet been realized.

"We need to prepare and position students to thrive," Koepf said. "MakerSpaces are collaborative spaces where students can explore, solve problems, think critically and creatively and apply their learning to real-world situations in areas that interest them. By providing students free access to equipment and materials, they will have the opportunity to develop and hone their skills that could potentially develop into a passion and future career opportunity."

The funds that Nordson has committed to makerspaces in the new schools will be used to purchase equipment and materials including laser cutters, vinyl cutters, 3D printers, building materials and many more essentials.

"We are excited to again partner with Nordson to create more opportunities for our students," Koepf said. "We can't wait to see what our students will create!"



AMY HIGGINS / ELYRIA SCHOOLS PHOTOS

Elyria's middle school students assemble robots in the makerspace — dubbed the Imagineering Hub — at Elyria High School.



BE A PIONEER

TIME TO ENROLL
Grades PK-12
Elyria City Schools

Contact
CENTRAL
Registration

440-284-8220

Creative collaboration gets results

Creativity and collaboration are hallmarks of today's leading thought environments.

Visit any classroom, any boardroom, any workroom in modern America, and you'll see this principle in action.

If a school, a company, a brand or even an individual is renowned for great success and grand accomplishments, you can almost guarantee that it's not attributable to hard work alone.

Bold, creative, out-of-the-box thinking is an essential skill for success in today's world.

In fact, that's really the story of life in the 21st century — finding innovative solutions to new and intricate challenges.

We're required to adapt to always-new technologies, ever-shifting political and social landscapes and a world that is, in general, increasingly unpredictable and full of surprises.

You can see this in action at Elyria Schools, where students are tasked daily with developing innovative solutions to unique challenges — in Makerspaces, in robotics competitions, in a host of celebrated academic and extra-curricular programs that teach students how to excel intellectually, academically and professionally.

It seems only fitting, then, that these same principles have undergirded all aspects of the historic building project currently underway for Elyria schools.

The project, originally slated to cost \$140 million, began to face serious budget challenges from the get-go — largely because of unforeseen circumstances affecting construction and planning costs.

A number of factors conspired to push construction costs ever higher.

For example: When Elyria voters approved the construction bond issue in 2016, the country was hit with a series of hurricanes — Harvey, Irma and Maria — that immediately impacted the cost of building supplies and materials.

Additionally, the state of Ohio logged a massive uptick in building projects — specifically, school building projects. This led to regional labor shortages, which also drove up costs. (Keep in mind, the state approved an unprecedented \$1 billion of new



MARTY YADON / ELYRIA SCHOOLS

A bird's eye view of the early stages of construction.



GREG ELEK

school construction around this time.)

In this environment, the district also had to align student enrollment numbers, operating income, the construction cost per square foot and so on.

It became a delicate balancing act — at times, almost overwhelming.

Fortunately, the school district had some seasoned pros at the helm.

Former Elyria Schools Superintendent Paul Rigda, hired as the Elyria Board of Education's liaison for the new construction project, worked alongside Ohio Facilities Construction Commission Projects Specialist, Ramzi Najjar, and Planning Specialist, Bill Prenosil, to negotiate the labyrinth of challenges on this project.

Local voters may remember that Prenosil and Rigda also worked closely together on the

Elyria High School project.

Consequently, they and Najjar were no strangers to this notion of creative collaboration in the name of cost savings.

Another mainstay and a tremendous asset on these local projects: AVG, the architectural firm that designed the new Elyria High, as well as designing the new stadium and the new buildings now underway.

Voters will be reassured to know that a core team of school and state administrators and construction professionals have worked alongside each other for the past few years, meeting a few times each month to scrutinize and massage every fine detail of the construction project.

It would be truly impossible to adequately cover every nuance of this process, but there are major milestones that stand out.

And they all hinge on a central point: Elyria Schools has managed to trim an incredible \$30 million in construction overages brought on by circumstances outside the district's control — all while protecting the utmost integrity of these new, 21st cen-

tury learning environments.

The education and wellness of Elyria's students has, and always will be, the core component in this entire process.

As the president of the Board of Education, I can proudly tell Elyria's voters that the district has indeed been a good steward of local tax dollars.

How did we manage to trim so much from the construction costs?

- Eliminated square footage at Northwood campus, saving nearly \$5 million.
- The core team — OFCC, the school district, architect and the construction manager — reconfigured certain elements (materials and design) to save about \$4 million.
- By saving the old school buildings for re-sale, rather than abating and demolishing them, the district saved \$6.6 million.
- Re-purposing existing fine arts space at the Westwood campus — essentially adding more classrooms to accommodate more students at that growing school — the district saved \$2 million.

There are many other examples

of how we've trimmed costs, inch by inch: negotiating lower construction and zoning fees with the township and city; the construction manager, AECOM, agreed to lower its fees; local utility companies agreed to cut service costs and lower fees.

With Superintendent Ann Schloss at the helm, the district continues in this tradition of creative collaboration in the name of public education.

It's often said that public trust is the golden egg of good governance.

As a board of education member, I'm in the unique and privileged position of advocating for Elyria's voters and students, all the while working closely alongside the people who administrate this process for Elyria Schools.

I can tell you firsthand that the process is working.

In fact, it's more than that — it has exceeded expectations and it continues to demonstrate the power of creativity and collaboration amid unpredictable challenges.

Greg Elek is president of the Elyria Schools Board of Education.

Upping the food game

New foodservice provider for Elyria Schools is broadening the culinary scene

Amy Higgins

Communications director

Fresh-roasted mushrooms are a delectable "extra" on the toppings bar of a fancy burger joint.

But in the school lunch line? Truly unique.

Fresh produce like this is the name of the game in a new program called "Discover Days" through Aramark Foodservice.

The program shines the spotlight on a different fruit or vegetable every month — and in a different elementary school location each time — giving students a chance to sample the produce and learn about its various nutritional benefits from Aramark's foodservice specialists.

On "Discover Days" students receive a visit from Aramark's cheeky mascot, Ace the Fox, who doles out plenty of high-fives and fist-bumps, and even brings along prizes for the students.

Discover Days is just one example of how Aramark Foodservice is connecting with its customers.

Aramark was hired as the district's foodservice provider at the beginning of this school year. From Day One, the company began analyzing the district's massive foodservice operations.

"It's our job to work with students, staff and faculty to see what will go and what won't," said Kyle Suerth, Aramark-Elyria Schools foodservice director.

School foodservice specialists have a labyrinth of regulatory factors to navigate, so getting creative in the kitchen isn't always an easy task.

But programs like Discover Days and others show the company's commitment to customer service and satisfaction.

One menu change that piqued student interest from the get-go was a new pizza provider. Aramark now serves Pizza Hut cheese and pepperoni on the line



MARTY YADON / ELYRIA SCHOOLS

Aramark teamed with the American Dairy Association to bring the Cleveland Browns Play 60 program to Elyria's elementary schools.

at the elementary and middle schools.

"The kids have been extremely receptive to the Pizza Hut product," Suerth said.

At Elyria High School, pizza is

made in-house, as is a vast array of other menu items — from subs and wraps to salads and soups, to stir fry and specialty pasta bakes.

You name it, they have it.

And this year, Aramark debuted Starbucks coffee products in the high school's casual dining space, The WiFi Cafe.

Elyria Schools operates one central kitchen located at Elyria

High School. That kitchen is where all school meals — breakfast, lunch and now dinner — are planned and prepared.

The culinary expert at the helm is Mark Blaszk, a former

chef with the Cleveland Indians and now working for Aramark in Elyria Schools.

"Chef Mark's culinary skill showcases what we're able to provide not just for students but for our catering service, which is a really big part of what we do," Suerth said.

The Aramark team recently jumped on the technology bandwagon and now offers mobile ordering services for high school students and staff through yet another point of service at Elyria High School: The Rathskellar.

The Rathskellar is a casual dining space located in the basement level of the Washington Building. It's where grab-and-go lunches and snacks are served and personal pizzas are made to order.

Just before the holidays, Aramark announced it was launching an afterschool meal program at Elyria High School through the federally funded Child and Adult Care Food Program, CACFP.

Monday through Friday (excluding school closures and holidays), 4 to 5:30 p.m., children can eat for free in the dining hall at Elyria High. Participants do not need to be enrolled in Elyria Schools, but they must be under the age of 18.

"We're feeding over 100 kids per day through the afterschool dinner program," Suerth said. "Students involved in sports and afterschool activities can come and have a meal. This program will help bring in an additional \$24,000 in revenue this year but the greatest impact is feeding kids who may not have had that meal."

Suerth said the after-school dinner program will soon expand and Elyria Schools will be the first district in Ohio to offer bagged "meals to go," free of charge, to every Elyria High student.

"We're working with the Ohio Department of Education to create a model for other districts to use as well," Suerth said.

Aramark will soon up its game at the middle school level by piloting made-to-order personal pizzas at Eastern Heights Middle School.

The products are made on a specialty pizza oven called an impinger, which moves pizzas on a conveyor as it bakes right before the customers' eyes.

"It's our highest participation concept that we have at the high school," Suerth said. "We use an impinger to create customized personal pizzas for students. Our thought is to use the same equipment at one of our schools to

prepare hot dishes at some of our satellite locations.

"We'll also be able to run hot fries for the first time ever and have them come out crispy, which is exciting," Suerth said.

"By building this concept into Eastern Heights we will be able to gauge any increases in sales," he said. "The idea is to mirror the concept at the opening of new buildings if it's successful, so students can have the food made to order in front of them as often as possible."

Aramark also has an eye on employee wellness and has introduced low-calorie, nutrient dense lunch options for staff.

Employees can use a special QR code that sends their order directly to the central kitchen, where it's prepared fresh the next day and delivered to their building.

In the realm of wellness, food and exercise go hand in hand.

Aramark teamed with the American Dairy Association to bring the Cleveland Browns Play 60 program to Elyria's elementary schools.

Youth camp counselors from the Cleveland Browns football program come out and work with students in 60-minute intervals to drive home a message about the importance of staying active.

Crestwood, Oakwood, Ely and Prospect elementary schools already have participated and more schools will come on board later this year.

Aramark's outreach extends beyond the schools.

The company is working with Second Harvest Food Bank to ensure its food deliveries are set up and ready for the monthly mobile food pantries hosted by Elyria Schools at Elyria High School and Oakwood Elementary School. (See schedule at www.elyriaschools.org.)

The company also spearheads a weekly backpack program in Elyria Schools to ensure students and families in need have food and essentials through the week-ends.

In the short time the Aramark team has been working in the district, they've made tremendous inroads in all things nutrition and wellness.



MARTY YADON / ELYRIA SCHOOLS PHOTOS

ABOVE: The Cleveland Browns Play 60 program emphasizes the importance of exercise.

BELOW: Aramark mascot, Ace the fox, stands ready at the Discover Days sampling table to give out hugs, high fives and fist bumps.



FAQs: Attendance areas, new school plan

Amy Higgins
Communications director

When will new schools open?

The Elyria Schools will open five new school sites in 2020 and 2021:

- Ely Elementary (K-4), 312 Gulf Road, Opening August 2020
- Hamilton Elementary (PK-4), 1215 Middle Ave., Opening August 2020
- Northwood Campus (K-8), 570 North Abbe Road, Opening August 2020
- Eastern Heights Campus (K-8), 528 Garford Ave., Opening August 2021
- Westwood Campus (K-8), Elyria Township, Opening August 2021

When will the existing schools permanently close?

The new schools will open over the course of the next two years and the existing schools will close as the new ones open.

The existing Ely Elementary, Franklin Elementary, Windsor Elementary and Northwood Middle schools will close permanently at the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

The existing schools of McKinley Elementary, Prospect Elementary, Oakwood Elementary, Crestwood Elementary and Eastern Heights Middle will permanently close at the end of the 2020-21 school year.

My student will be a fifth grader in 2020, where will they go?

If your residence is located in Northwood Campus attendance area, your student will attend fifth grade at the new Northwood Campus in 2020-21.

If your residence is located outside the Northwood Campus attendance area, your student will attend fifth grade in their existing elementary school.

My student currently attends Franklin Elementary School and will be in fifth grade next year. The new Hamilton Elementary building only serves preschool through fourth grade and the new Eastern Heights Campus doesn't open until 2021-22.

Where will my fifth grader attend school in 2020-21?

This is a great question, and one that is still under review. Scenarios are currently being studied to address this matter. Further information will be

available soon.

The boundary map (located at www.elyriaschools.org/ boundaries) indicates that my attendance area has changed and I would like my student to now attend the school that is within the boundaries of my neighborhood. What should I do?

There is no need for you to do anything! Your student will be counted in the enrollment for your neighborhood school.

If my boundaries have changed and my student opted (through the cohort choice application process) to stay with classmates of the school they currently attend that is outside my neighborhood boundaries, will my student receive transportation to and from school?

No. School bus transportation is provided within attendance areas.

How will I know if my student is eligible for bus transportation to the school that is located in my attendance area?

If your student lives more than 1.25 miles from school, they will be eligible for bus transportation.

If your residence is near a roadway, intersections or railroad crossings that have been deemed as hazardous crossings by First Student Transportation you may be eligible for bus transportation even if you live within the 1.25 mile radius.

This will be determined by First Student Transportation prior to the 2020-21 school year.

Questions related to transportation may be directed to First Student, 440-284-8030, or the Elyria Schools Operations Department, (440) 284-8206.

Will there be opportunities for parents and students to tour new schools before the new school year begins?

Absolutely! The new schools of Ely Elementary, Hamilton Elementary and Northwood Campus will open this fall for the 2020-21 school year. We will host opening ceremonies in the fall of 2020 to allow students and parents an opportunity to tour the schools before the first day of class.

We'll do the same the following year when the new Eastern

Heights and Westwood Campuses open.

Look for a calendar of events this spring on www.elyriaschools.org and on Facebook/[elyriacityschools](https://www.facebook.com/elyriacityschools) and Twitter/[elyriaschools](https://twitter.com/elyriaschools).

There also will be opportunities to say farewell to existing schools before they permanently close. A schedule of events will be posted this spring at www.elyriaschools.org.

Campus schools are new to Elyria. How do they work?

Campus schools essentially function as independent elementary and middle schools, but under one roof.

The new Northwood, Eastern Heights and Westwood sites are campus schools. They will each serve students in kindergarten through eighth grade.

Within the campus, kindergarten through fourth grade will attend the elementary school while fifth through eighth grade attend the middle school.

The elementary and middle schools will have their own unique entrances, parking areas and main offices.

There also will be separate drop off/ pick up areas for bussing. Elementary and middle school students will not ride school buses at the same time. (Before the start of the 2020-21 school year, parents whose students are eligible for bussing will receive a letter indicating pick-up and drop-off locations.)

Each campus will have separate elementary and middle school offices with their own administrators and school staff. The elementary and middle schools will offer grade-level wings with all their own facilities within the wings, including restrooms.

Elementary and middle school students will not co-mingle. There are some common spaces that are shared, such as the dining hall or health clinic, for instance, but in these settings, elementary and middle school areas are separated.

Elementary and middle school students have separate gymnasiums and separate playgrounds/ outside areas, and the playgrounds are fenced for safety.

The elementary and middle schools within the campus sites

also will start and end at different times of the day, as they do now. This will help alleviate traffic congestion at the campus sites.

Why do we have two stand-alone elementary schools and how will students transition from these schools to campus schools in fifth grade?

The district is large with more than 6,300 students all told. As the district planned for new schools in 2016, a five-school plan was devised to accommodate all K-8 students in all quadrants of the city.

During the planning stage, school officials determined that the new schools would be built on properties that the district already owns.

The properties that will house Northwood, Eastern Heights and Westwood are large enough to accommodate sprawling campus buildings.

The properties that will house the new Ely Elementary and Hamilton Elementary have much less acreage, but they are well located to a large populous of students who live in the surrounding neighborhoods.

This is how the five-school plan came to be.

What can we look forward to in the new schools?

The new schools are amazing, and they offer all the modern, sophisticated learning spaces students need today to access the world around them and to prepare them for future careers and college.

There are unique design elements to our new schools that will make them special and quite unlike any other facilities in the district.

Grade levels will be housed in their own exclusive settings so that students of the same ages can interact and collaborate, and teachers can function easily as grade-level teams.

The grade-level units will have interesting multi-use spaces called Extended Learning Areas (ELAs) with creative seating and tools for collaboration and hands-on learning. Grade-level units also will offer individual classrooms with more traditional set ups. All spaces throughout the schools will feature the most

advanced technology and tools in education.

As conveniences go, the new schools will be temperature controlled for hot and cold weather to offer students a comfortable learning environment no matter the weather outside.

Finishes within the school are bright, cheerful and inspiring.

Grade-level units feature their own unique color palette that appears on floors, and in touches on the walls and ductwork in each interior space.

The colors are handsome to the eye but they are functional, too. In what's called "wayfinding," the colors serve as a map of sorts to help students navigate their way through the building and ultimately to their grade-level "home base."

Wayfinding is just one way to make big schools feel smaller for students who are traveling the halls. The specially designated grade-level color palettes offer continuity of design throughout the district.

New schools also have important safety enhancements like interior and exterior cameras, well-lit parking areas and entrances, high visibility inside and outside the building, secure vestibules and controlled entries and security doors within to close areas of the building if needed.

In partnership with the Elyria Police Department and Lorain County Sheriff's Office, the district will employ law enforcement officers within the new campuses to assist students and families and further enhance security.

To learn more about the progress of the new schools and to take a virtual reality tour, visit www.elyriaschools.org.

COUNT

From 1

place every 10 years, mandated by the Constitution.

Census data tracks the size of our nation's population, but it also sets the stage for each state's legislative representation and determines how billions of dollars in federal funding are allocated among states.

Road repairs, hospital care, school meals — all of this funding is vital to our local community.

Underrepresentation in the census means less money for critical supports and services where they are needed most.

The Census Bureau has identified children under the age of 5 as among the most undercounted people in the nation.

According to Dr. Judy Aschner of the Federation of Pediatric Organizations (FOPO), "Children 0 to 4 are at the greatest risk of being undercounted, and many, many programs that support families, young children and communities depend on an accurate count."

"They can't count themselves," Census Bureau Director Dr. Steven Dillingham continued. "They're counting on you to count them."

In a news conference in Cleveland recently, FOPO declared March 25 as Every Child Counts Day.

The organization is encouraging pediatricians throughout the U.S. to get the word out on the Census.

Families with children need to be aware of the critical need for accurate Census data.

For the first time in Census history, citizens can take the survey online, making it easier than ever to respond.

The Census survey is said to be about nine questions long. It can be completed digitally, by phone, by mail or in person with a credentialed Census Taker.

Census materials will be mailed to each household in March and should arrive between March 12 and March 20.

Our participation matters: Parents and residents are encouraged to visit www.2020census.gov to learn more about the Census its impact in our community.

Ann Schloss is superintendent of Elyria Schools.

New boundaries take effect in 2020-21

Amy Higgins
Communications director

Three of five new schools are set to open in the fall of 2020: Ely, a K-4 elementary on Gulf Road; Hamilton, a PK-4 elementary on Middle Avenue; and Northwood Campus, a large K-8 elementary/middle school on North Abbe Road.

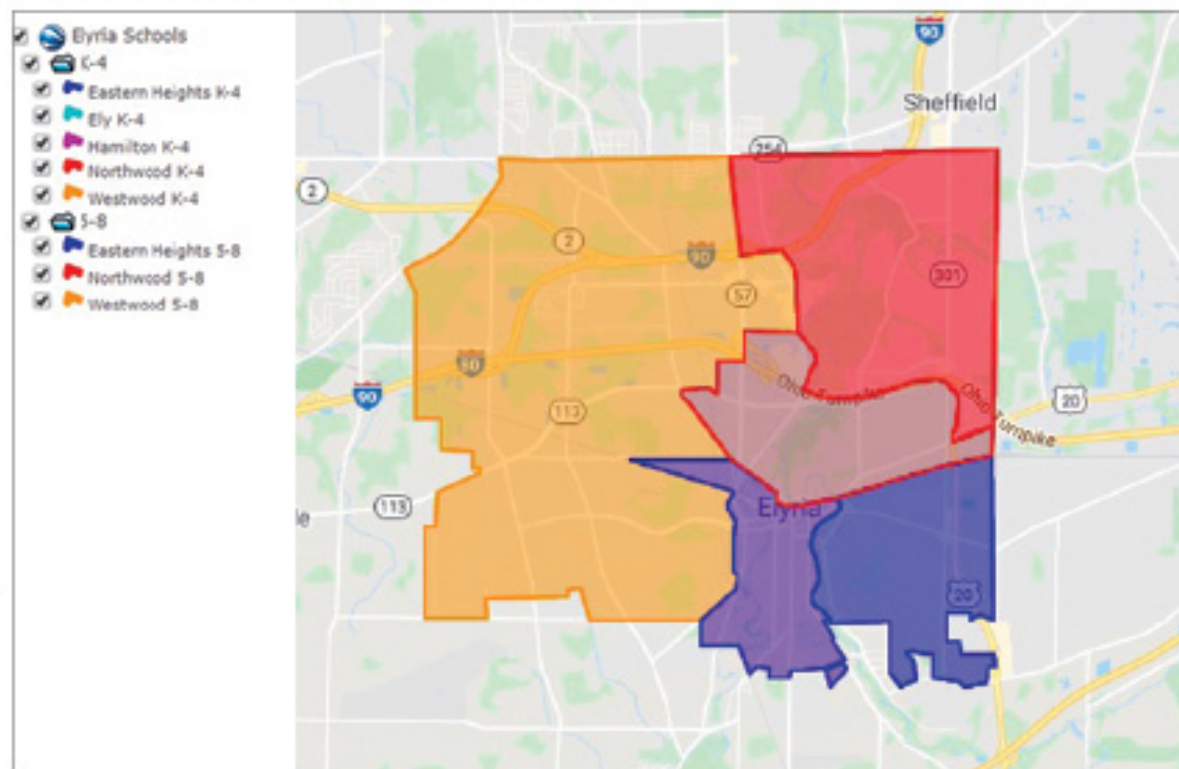
In the fall of 2021, the final two schools will open.

Like Northwood Campus, both are large schools that serve elementary and middle-school students under one roof: Eastern Heights Campus, a K-8 school on Garford Avenue; and Westwood Campus, a K-8 school on Griswold Road in Elyria Township.

Last month, the district rolled out new boundaries that will go into effect for all students in the 2020-21 school year.

The new boundaries outline attendance areas for new elementary and campus schools in the district.

An online tool located at www.elyriaschools.org/boundaries lets residents search attendance areas by home addresses.



The new boundaries outline attendance areas for new elementary and campus schools in the district.

An online tool located at www.elyriaschools.org/boundaries lets residents search attendance areas by home addresses.

The new boundaries could move students to other schools next year so it's important for parents to use the search tool to review new attendance areas.

For questions on new bound-

aries, please contact the Elyria Schools Pupil Services Department at 440-284-8203.

Spring Craft Fair supports Special Olympics

Amy Higgins
Communications director

The "maker faire" of Special Olympics — otherwise known as the Spring Craft and Vendor Fair — returns to Elyria High School for the sixth straight year on Saturday, March 28.

More than 60 craft and vendor booths are expected with everything from jewelry and soaps to carvings and specialty arts.

The event kicks off at 10 a.m. and runs until 3 p.m. in the high school dining hall. Guests are encouraged to park in the large lot off West Avenue and to enter through the doors by the gymnasium. Ample parking is available.

There is no fee to attend but donations are appreciated.

All donations and proceeds benefit the Special Olympics and the annual Lorain County Special Olympic Track and Field Event held in May at Ely Stadium.

SPRING CRAFT & VENDOR FAIR

TO BENEFIT SPECIAL OLYMPICS

March 28th

10-3pm

at Elyria High School

ELYRIA SCHOOLS

The Spring Craft and Vendor Fair, noted for its excellent selection of quality products and services, also stands out for family friendly fun and attractions.

For the second consecutive year, the event will coincide with an Easter Egg Hunt for kids ages 10 and under.

The fun kicks off at 10:30 a.m.

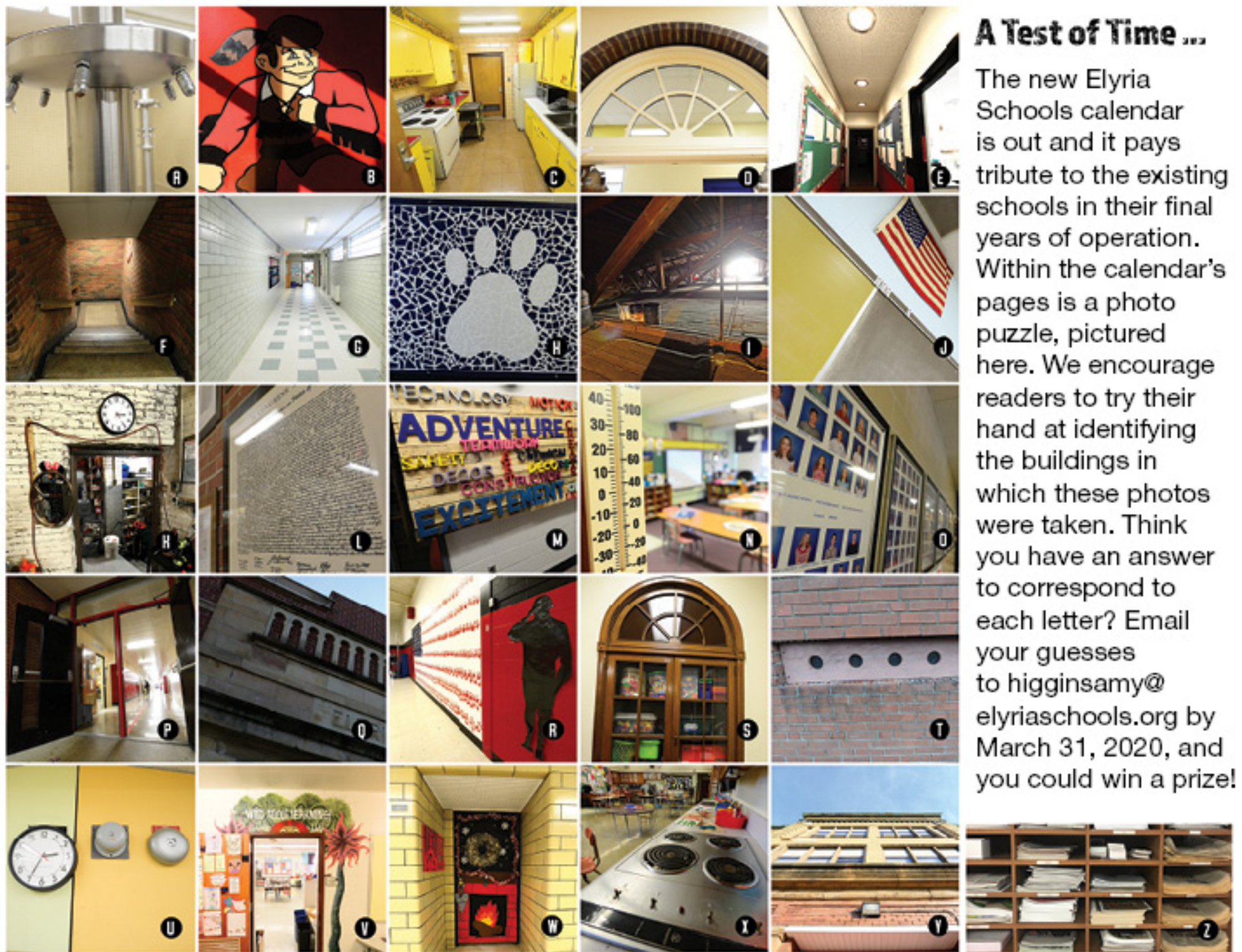
for children ages 3 and under, followed at 11:30 a.m. for kids 4 to 6, and again at 12:30 p.m. for ages 7 to 10.

The Easter Egg Hunt is sponsored by the Elyria High School Leo Club. It takes place in the small gym near the dining hall.

More merry-making takes place at the craft fair, with the arrival

of the Easter Bunny at 11 a.m. and free entertainment from folk singer Mike Brand at 11 a.m., Sharon's Signers at noon, and the Elyria High School Jazz Band at 1 p.m.

For more information or to reserve a booth in the fair, email orrandrea@elyriaschools.org.



A Test of Time ...

The new Elyria Schools calendar is out and it pays tribute to the existing schools in their final years of operation. Within the calendar's pages is a photo puzzle, pictured here. We encourage readers to try their hand at identifying the buildings in which these photos were taken. Think you have an answer to correspond to each letter? Email your guesses to higginsamy@elyriaschools.org by March 31, 2020, and you could win a prize!

COMFORT

From 1

Martinez brought the idea of training her next puppy as a certified comfort dog to Crestwood principal, Dana Cerrito. Martinez suggested he become part of the Crestwood crew in that capacity.

Without hesitation, Cerrito enthusiastically agreed.

"Her support was the springboard for me to get this process going," Martinez said. "The kids have been a part of (the process) from when he was a puppy and through his training cycles. The students

have been very supportive, very active and very engaged with him even before they knew him."

Now as a working dog Griffen comes to Crestwood once a week and his visits are intentionally "unannounced," Martinez said, to encourage daily attendance.

In the few short months he's been at Crestwood, Griffen has left a mark on nearly everyone he's met.

He's even somewhat of local celebrity. He made the front page of *The Chronicle-Telegram* and was featured on the regional cable channel Spectrum News.

Most recently, an artist and family member of a Crestwood student captured Griff-

en's big soulful eyes and gentle giant persona on canvas. The painting was gifted to the school and it now hangs prominently in Crestwood's main hallway across from the office.

"(Griffen's) goal is just to be here and support the staff and students in any way, and it's been quite effective," Martinez said.

"He brings a positive energy wherever he goes. (Staff and students) will say, 'Oh I needed you so much today.' It's so fascinating to see how much this little furball can make people smile when they've had the worse day or they just needed a little extra and that piece of chocolate didn't

work," Martinez said. "He just does it and he doesn't say a word, he just sits there."

On days when Griffen is not at Crestwood, "mini-Griffens" take over. These soft, cuddly plush toys are small replicas of the real Griffen. Martinez found stuffed animals online and with financial support from friends and others, bought a set that provides for one or two mini-Griffens per classroom.

The mini-Griffens are comfort stand-ins when the real Griffen isn't there. They are also part of an incentive and reward system for what Martinez and the Crestwood staff deem as "PAWS-ative" behavior.