



Your Public Schools Niagara Falls, NY



Empire State Advantage Gold Level Awardee

October 2017

Community Newsletter

Volume 3 Issue 2

Maple Avenue School turns 95!

During the 2017 -2018 academic year, we are celebrating the 95th birthday of Maple Avenue School.

Built in 1922, it is the oldest school building in the city still serving its original purpose. (Niagara Street was built in 1919 and is the oldest school community, but the building was replaced in 2007).

The first principal of Maple Avenue School was Sara Woods Johnson, who was beloved in the community not only as the Maple Avenue School Principal and a school district employee for 45 years, but also as the superintendent of her church's Sunday School, a founder of the Boys and Girls Club, and an active volunteer at the Y.

Upon her sudden death in 1952, a memorial fund was established in her memory, which funded, among other things, the school's first playground.

The school itself was constructed to replace a smaller school located on McKoon Avenue. Although it has received additions, Maple retains the wide hallways and natural woodwork characteristic of schools in days gone by.

Many celebrations are planned throughout the school year to celebrate this auspicious occasion and fondly recall the students and staff who are part of its story.



Happy 95th Birthday,
Maple Avenue School!



#MapleXCV

Students and staff, wearing Maple Avenue tee shirts, are planning to be photographed via drone, while standing in the shape of a Maple leaf. A new school logo has been adopted by the school, which invited partners and neighbors to its open house. The school itself is sporting red, white, and blue bunting on its front windows and bell tower.

According to Norma Higgs column in the *Niagara Gazette* (March 11, 2013), the bell in that tower when Maple opened was the same bell that tolled for the original Maple Avenue School. Built in 1908 on the corner of Maple and Whitney avenues, it had been built to replace the McKoon Avenue "school," actually a room rented by the Board of Education for the purpose of holding classes for children.

Maple Avenue School has been a good neighbor. In 1935, it welcomed Christmas worshippers from Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church, who held services at the school because the congregation normally met in a basement and needed more space for the holiday service.

During World War II, it was just one of the schools prepared to open a casualty station to host doctors, nurses, and dentists in the event of an emergency caused directly or indirectly by the war.

The school community has seen its share of sadness over the years. In 1931, a six-year-old child was struck by a hit-and-run driver, as she attempted to cross Lewiston Road after school. It is believed she recovered.

In 1967, Maple got the District's first portable classrooms, as the school was overflowing with students, in part due to integration reconfiguration.

The District is currently seeking the eldest surviving former student from Maple Avenue School, for the purpose of photographing him or her with today's youngest student. Any one who may be able to suggest a candidate is asked to contact Community Relations at 286-4245 or jglaser@nfschools.net.

Watch throughout the year for additional celebratory activities, as Maple has a dry-run for its 100th year in 2022.

The District is proud to stand with the community against racism, extremism, and bigotry, hate speech, and intolerance of others based on race, gender identity, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender. Respect for all is a part of our culture in the District and we are proud to celebrate the diversity which makes our District and our community strong.

Kalfas Turns 60!

Henry J. Kalfas Magnet Elementary School celebrates its 60th year in 2018. Originally opened as Beech Avenue School 1958, the design of the school by the architectural firm of Sargent, Webster, Crenshaw, and Folley was so well received that it was selected by the U.S. Office of Education to be displayed at the International School Building Exposition in Geneva, Switzerland.

In 1978, the school was renamed for Henry J. Kalfas, who oversaw the integration of the schools while Superintendent. He held this position from 1969-1978. Kalfas was a World War II Marine, a teacher at Center Avenue Elementary School, principal of Beech Avenue School and North Junior High School, and the founder of the Festival of



Lights.

Special events planned to commemorate the anniversary include:

**September 14, 2017
Open House – Community Celebration**

The school community will be invited to participate in a cer-

emonial ribbon cutting commemorating our 60th year at the beginning of our Open House Event. In addition to classroom presentations, a brief history of Kalfas will be presented with a very large anniversary cake.

(See page 4)

From the Superintendent



Mark Laurrie

These are difficult times in our nation, and I have been asked from time to time how the District handles issues like those being discussed in national media: race, gender identity, and so on. I am thrilled and proud to say, we do not have special programs or interventions-- because we do not need them.

Our diversity is our strength and we accept and value the life experience every member of our District family brings, whether student or adult. Celebrating every person's worth is part of our organizational culture and daily practice.

We live in a diverse community. Our schools reflect that diversity. In every school, there is representation of different races, ethnic backgrounds, religious beliefs, cisgender, transgender, gay, straight, and so on. Because students grow up with diversity, it is a natural part of life. When incidence of bullying occur, they are handled on a case-by-case basis. While no district is perfect, and no

amount of bullying is acceptable, we do not tend to see bullying based on race, sexual orientation, religion, or other broad-stroke categorizations.

It can be difficult to explain things to children that they may have seen or heard on the news or social media. I am glad to say that the very reason it is difficult is a positive thing: because it is outside of their realm of experience. Our students do not experience, nor will this District ever tolerate, anything less than respectful behavior toward all.

October is National Bullying Prevention Month. It is a month in which we might choose to talk in our homes about some of the most egregious examples of bullying, those with which we are all familiar. Names come to mind. Actions come to mind. Stories from the news come to mind.

I am proud that our students come to schools where they are valued and encouraged to be their best selves, valuing and encouraging those around them to be their best selves. We are a proud, diverse, accepting community. Without that, education would not matter.

From the Board



Ron Barstys

What do assessment scores mean, and what should they mean? This is a time in the history of New York State public education that is, by many measures, the most complex it has ever been.

In the old days, parents woke their children, fed them breakfast, and sent them to school. At the end of the day, children returned home, did their homework, and discussed their school days with their parents—one of whom was probably there to welcome and supervise children, to check homework, and review any study sheets sent home.

Teachers followed a curriculum that satisfied state requirements, but also afforded some time to teach extra topics or go back over more complex topics. When children were tested – and as students at that time, we were tested, not “assessed” – the responsibility for achieving a passing grade was assumed to be

the children's. Today, the world is different. Many of our students come to school to eat breakfast, return to a home in which mom or dad may be out working and may very well be the only adult in the household. The students are less likely to have conversations about school with their parent, because that parent has a full plate earning, washing, laundering, cooking, and generally providing all the care for the children as a one-person operation.

I can only imagine how much work and how stressful that is. The State-designated curricula are dense and packed; there is little to no extra time for teachers to add or re-teach concepts. When students are administered a New York State assessment, their grades reflect on their teachers as well as themselves, and these assessments are not locally-designed instruments, but State-mandated tools.

There are some up sides to the theory behind increased State-wide oversight; it should allow a comparison (continued on page 5)

Outstanding Alumni 2017

The Board of Education will honor its second class of distinguished alumni at the regular meeting of that body in October. Each individual has been featured on a 24 by 36 inch poster, one of which will be displayed at every school.

Superintendent Mark Laurrie said, “We want to publicly acknowledge the talented and successful people who have been educated in our schools and we want to hold those individuals up as role models to current students.”

Those to be honored represent various fields of endeavor and eras.

This year's class includes:

Mark Bridges - Niagara Falls High School. A 2013 Oscar-winning costume designer, he won his Oscar for the movie *The Artist*, but has worked on many films over his career.

Chauncey Brown - Niagara Falls High School. Dr. Brown is an operameterist in Philadelphia. He attended Syracuse University after overcoming difficulty in his childhood and early adult years.

Lynn Ligammari - Niagara Falls High School. A nationally renowned saxophonist, Lynn a graduate from the Eastman

School of Music. She performs with a wide array of musical projects that include the Afro-Peruvian Jazz Orchestra, Conor Oberst, Al Chez & The Brothers of Funk, and more. She has played at Carnegie Hall, NPR, the Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon, the David Letterman Show, and more. She is also a teaching artist for Lincoln Center Education.

Richard MacDougall - LaSalle Senior High School. Lt. Col. U.S. Army (Ret.) His career included supporting Special Operations Missions in both Iraq and Afghanistan. He currently works with the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) at MacDill Air Force Base and is the Chief of SOF Joint Collective Training. In this position Mr. MacDougall is responsible for over 235 Joint SOF trainers and exercise planners positioned world-wide designing exercises in support of counter-terrorism.

LuAnn Via (nee Strasburg) - LaSalle Senior High School. President and Chief Executive Officer of LSV Advisory Group, LLC. For the past 11 years she has held the position of Chief Executive Officer/President of Domestic and International Manufacturing as well as Apparel, and Family Footwear

Specialty Retailers. She has managed manufacturing facilities in the USA, India and Asia and retail stores with revenues ranging from \$350 million to \$2.6 billion with stores ranging from 400 to 4000 across the globe. LuAnn began her retail career at Adam, Mel-drum and Anderson Company. She went on to hold various leadership roles at several retail and manufacturing companies, including President of Lane Bryant and Catherines Plus Sizes, President & CEO of Payless ShoeSource and most recently President, CEO and Board Director at Christopher & Banks in Minneapolis, MN.

Recognized last year were Kelvon Agee, NFHS Class of 2004 Emmy Award Winning Director of Photography/Producer “Deadliest Catch;” John T. Anderson, Gaskill Middle School, American Hero, name-sake, annual Military Broadcast Journalist of the Year; Jane Bryant Quinn, NFHS, Class of 1957, nationally known financial journalist; Andrea Patterson, NFHS Class of 2006, Student/Cancer Researcher; and Tommy Tedesco, NFHS, Class of 1946 World Class Musician. Nominations continue to be accepted. Email Judie Glaser at jglaser@nfschools.net.

**2017-2018
Board of Education
Learning For All ...
Whatever It Takes
www.nfschools.net**

Nick Vilardo
President
283-3206 (h)

Robert Restaino
Vice-President
285-8185 (h)

Ron Barstys
299-8233 (c)

Earl Bass
471-9775 (c)

Vincent “Jimmy” Cancemi
284-2688 (w)

Kevin Dobbs
282-5152 (h)

Art Jocoy Jr.
283-9329 (h)

Anthony Paretto
283-0372 (h)

Russell Petrozzi
297-8663 (h)

Mark Laurrie
Superintendent
286-4253 (w)

**THE PUBLIC IS WELCOME
at all Board of Education
Meetings.**

Wolverine Football



For Varsity Football games at the NFHS Main Stadium, please be aware of the following policies, which are in place for all home games.

1. All currently enrolled Niagara Falls High School Students must show their Niagara Falls High School ID upon entering the stadium.
2. All Prep school and elementary school students must be accompanied by an adult in order to be admitted to the game.
3. All visitors must remain in the bleacher area or on the outside of the perimeter fence. No spectators will be allowed within the track or infield areas of the stadium.
- 4. Visitors to the NFHS Main Stadium will not be able to re-enter the stadium once they leave.**
- 5. No wide receivers have been traded during the pre-season; all your favorite players are still here! Join us!**



Many thanks



As part of a statewide project under the Community Action Angels Program, Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. obtained a laptop computer donated by Nate's Computers. The laptop was presented to Niagara Falls High School graduate Kalaub King, who is attending Niagara County Community College.

Niagara Falls City School District officials selected Mr. King to receive this honor. Pictured left to right are: Suzanne Shears, CEO, Niagara Community Action Program, Inc., Carrie Buchman, Team Two Administrator, NFHS, Kalaub King, Niagara Falls High School graduate, Andrew Forgette, Nate's Computers, and Robert Bradley, Chief Educational Administrator, NFHS.

Also, as the school year got under way, the faculty of Hyde Park Elementary School accepted a donation from American Medical Response -

backpacks filled with school supplies for students attending the school.

This is the second consecutive year AMR - formerly Rural Metro-- has made this donation. Regional Director Thomas Maxian

reached out to the District last year, explaining that AMR wants to give back to the community. They came back to Hyde Park at Open House and opened one of their ambulances for tours by students and parents. That simple act could go a long way toward allaying fears in the event a student of the family member of a student ever needs to be inside one.

"We are absolutely thrilled to help school children in our community. Our company and our employees contributed to the school supply drive and we look forward to doing this for years to come."

Principal Mary Kerins is delighted to receive the donation.

"So many families struggle at back-to-school time. It's very helpful to have a hand in helping students start out with basic supplies."

AMR is proud to be the leader in the delivery of 911

Cornell Cooperative Extension

By Jennifer Tynan/School Coordinator

MICROWAVE BAKED APPLE

- 1 med. baking apple
- 1 tbsp. brown sugar
- 2 tsp. butter
- Cinnamon to taste

Fun Fall Activities for the Whole Family!

Ah, fall is in the air. Can't you just feel it? The air is getting cooler and the leaves are changing color. Fall is a great time to do fun things outdoors with your family-especially before winter sets in and everyone wants to hibernate!

Wash, peel and core apple. Fill center of apple with brown sugar and top with butter. Sprinkle with cinnamon. Cook uncovered in microwave 2 to 2 1/2 minutes at high or until almost tender. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

Here are some fun fall activities to try:

1. Pick pumpkins at a local pumpkin patch. Carve them when you get home. Roast the seeds for a yummy snack.
2. Rake the leaves in your yard. Make a pile of leaves and takes turns jumping into it or collect leaves and identify them
3. Go on a guided nature hike at a local park or nature center.
4. Visit your local Farmer's Market
5. Go apple picking and make this easy, fun recipe:

- Cook 2 apples 3 to 3 1/2 minutes at high.
- Cook 3 apples 4 to 4 1/2 minutes at high.
- Cook 4 apples 5 to 5 1/2 minutes at high.



Above, Niagara Street Principal Rocco Merino, Niagara County Legislator Dennis Virtuoso, City Councilmember Kenny Tompkins, Jill Wade and Lindsay Piper from Verizon, and Superintendent Mark Laurrie. Below, Thomas Maxian, Regional Director, American Medical Response, Karen Landsittel, Executive Assistant and Office Manager, Scott Karaszewski, Chief EMS Officer, present school supplies in book bags to Hyde Park School Principal Mary Kerins.



emergency and non-emergency inter-facility transportation throughout Erie and Niagara counties, serving communities from Niagara Falls to Evans.

Meanwhile, at Niagara Street School, Principal Rocco Merino and Superintendent Mark Laurrie gratefully accepted supplies donated by Verizon employees from the Military Road store. Niagara County Legislator Dennis Virtuoso and City Councilmember Kenny Tompkins assisted with the donation presented by Jill Wade and Lindsay Piper.

Capital Projects Referendum Coming in December

Roofs. Windows. Paving. These are not exciting things to contemplate, but fail to think about them and things can get very exciting indeed-- and not in a good way. New York State helps districts think about avoiding that type of negative excitement.

Every District is required to complete a periodic assessment of all its buildings. New York State Education Law and regulations require a building condition survey (BCS) for all occupied school buildings to be conducted at least every five years. Based on the findings of that survey, districts must then decide what action needs to be taken to protect the substantial investments communities have already made in their schools. Taking appropriate action also protects communities from having to scramble to deal with an unprepared-for calamity, like a leaking roof for example.

The District's BCS drew attention to some needed projects. For example, new roofs are needed quite badly at Maple Avenue School and Cataract Elementary School. In addition, it seems like the 'new' high school opened yesterday, but in fact it was 2000 when the first students reported to class. The roof had been on the structure for some time before that memorable day, meaning the roof is nearing the end of its 20-year warranty-- and it shows.

Likewise, the well-used facility, which welcomes not only students but the community at large for events and programs that take place almost every day of the year, is surrounded by a well-used parking lot. It needs repair, too.

Throughout the District, there maintenance items like drains, flooring, and boilers that need replacing. There are safety and security items like fire doors, public announcement systems, motion detectors, and windows that made the list. There are even some instructional tools like interactive white boards that are at the end of their life cycle.

But most of the needs are mundane, and deal with water, concrete, flooring, or wood. The deal with pumps, valves, generators, and tanks.

Kitchen at 79th Street School

One item on the list is an equity issue. Seventy-ninth Street School is the only remaining school with no hot kitchen. To build one within the existing footprint of the building is a goal for these projects. That's an issue of parity; every student should be able to get meals of comparable quality, as fresh and as hot as possible. That is especially true in a community where some students may get their most nutritious meal during the school day.



Seems like yesterday. But it was almost two decades ago that NFHS was brand new.

Funding

As any property owner knows, these items are expensive. Fortunately, the District has found a way to meet its needs, without burdening the local taxpayer, by using, in part, QZABs or Qualified Zone Academy Bonds. Congress created the QZAB program, which provides bondholders with a federal tax credit in lieu of a cash interest payment. The federal government provides the interest payment, so the district then is typically only responsible for repaying the value of the bond. This reduces the burden on local communities when financing school renovation.

But what about the value of the bond? In our case, due to the relative poverty of our area,

we realize a 98% reimbursement rate from the State on approved capital projects. That leaves a local share of only two percent. However, the District still has \$1.4 million in EXCEL (Expanding our Children's Education and Learning) grant funds, with which it can pay that two percent.

Moreover, the State reimburses its 98% based on a calculation that includes an interest rate that districts using QZABs don't actually pay, thereby reimbursing a bit more than the district actually spent.

Date

There will much more information coming on this issue, but please note December 12 on your calendar as voting day, from noon to 9 p.m.

Seventy-ninth Street School: it has a lovely new playground, thanks to funds from Sen. Ortt, but alas, it has no kitchen. This school is one that issues identified on the Building Conditions Survey.



Dontello Douglas and LaVonte' Maye did some work at Cataract Elementary School.

Kalfas Turns 60!

(continued from page 1)

**October 23-27, 2017
Spirit Week - Student Celebration**

A week-long series of school wide events will be coordinated by the Kalfas Student Ambassador Club to include themed dress days, classroom visits/read alouds by past principals, the taking of a school picture (mirroring an early photograph) and a visit by the Niagara Falls Fire Department.

**October 20, 2017 6:00-8:00 PM
Henry J. Kalfas - Beech Avenue School Night**

A semi-formal event will feature hors d'oeuvre food stations throughout the school, a specialty beverage/coffee bar, student ambassador tours, and musical ambiance provided by NFHS students. Formal invitations will be sent to current staff, BOE Members, and former administrators. District staff and the general public will be invited via email and local media with reserved attendance limited to 200.

Athletic Hall of Fame Hall of Fame Nomination Form

The Niagara Falls City School District is seeking nominations for its Athletic Hall of Fame. The hall honors athletes, coaches and teams who have had an outstanding high school athletic career while enrolled in the Niagara Falls City School District. This includes honorary membership for administrators and support staff who have made a major impact on the District athletic program. The criteria for nominees are: 1. An athlete must have graduated a minimum of five years prior to nomination; 2. A coach must be retired from a particular sport s/he is nominated for a minimum of two years; 3. Teams with outstanding achievements must have participated a minimum of five years prior to nomination; 4. Honorary nominees, if a District employee, must be retired from the district a minimum of two years. If the honorary nominee is not a District employee, the nominee must be away from the participation in the sports program for a minimum of two years. The community is encouraged to take part by nominating those who meet this criteria. Nominations should be mailed to:

Niagara Falls High School Athletic Office
Joe Contento, Athletic Director
4455 Porter Road
Niagara Falls, NY 14305.

Hall of Fame Nomination				
Name of Nominee _____				
Category (circle one)	Athlete	Coach	Team	Honorary
Nominee's Years of Participation _____				
School _____		Sport(s) _____		
Nominee's Present Address _____ _____				
Phone _____				
Nominator's Name _____				
Address _____ _____				
Phone _____				

Nominations will be accepted throughout the year, and will be reviewed annually by the selection committee. An induction dinner will be held to honor those who are selected.

Safety Corner

Think you know about mumps? Read this from the CDC.

Mumps vaccine is the best way to protect your child against mumps, a contagious disease that can cause serious complications.

Mumps is a contagious disease caused by a virus. Anyone who has not had mumps or been vaccinated can get the disease. There is no treatment for mumps, and it can cause long-term health problems. Before there was a vaccine, mumps was the leading cause for viral encephalitis (infection of the brain) and sudden deafness in the U.S. You can protect yourself and your family against mumps with vaccination.

Mumps vaccine is the best way to protect your child against mumps. It is usually given as part of a combination vaccine that protects against three diseases: measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR). The MMR vaccine is safe and effective. Most children don't have any side effects from the vaccine. The side effects that do occur are usually very mild, such as a fever or rash.

Children should get two doses of MMR vaccine:

- the first dose at 12 through 15 months of age, and
- the second dose at 4 through 6 years of age.

Your child's doctor may also offer the MMRV vaccine, a combination vaccine that protects against four diseases: measles,

mumps, rubella, and varicella (chickenpox).

Protect **Yourself** Against Mumps
Anyone born **during or after 1957, who has never had mumps or has never been vaccinated, is at risk for mumps.**

They should get at least one dose of the MMR vaccine. Two doses are recommended for adults at higher risk, such as students in college, trade school, and training programs; international travelers; and healthcare professionals.

Mumps Can Be Serious
In most children, mumps is pretty mild. But it can cause serious, long-lasting problems including

- encephalitis (swelling of the brain),
- meningitis (swelling of the tissue covering the brain and spinal cord),
- loss of hearing (temporary and permanent),
- orchitis (swelling of the testicles) in males who have reached puberty,
- oophoritis (swelling of the ovaries) and/or mastitis (swelling of the breasts) in females who have reached puberty.

In rare cases, mumps is deadly.

From the Board

(Continued from page 1)

of districts across the state, for example. Unfortunately, that isn't really what is achieved, because according to state rules, if a student arrives in your district the day before the assessment, that new district "owns" the results. Similarly, if a student moves out of State and fails to report his or her new district to the New York district, his or her former district continues to be responsible for that individual, often having to count as a drop out a student who has simply moved away.

The most important results of testing students should be two simple things: to determine how the student is doing and to inform instruction. By that, we simply mean that if many children miss the same question or concept, the teacher knows there must be an adjustment made to how, or for how long, that concept is taught.

Are tests different than they used to be? They sure are. Is it bad that the state and federal government are mandating what should be taught and assessed? Not entirely.

The nation has to increase rigor in order to remain competitive in the global economy.

But one of the problems with the State assessments is that, because they test relatively new curricula, most districts are ranking poorly. This upsets people in every community. But when you look at the results from some of the most affluent districts around us, even they are not achieving what we used to call a passing grade.

The important thing to remember is that every district in the state is in it together, and every student shares a boat with the other 2.6 million other NYS public school students. What we can do right here and right now is control what we can control as parents.

Ask about the school day. Check the homework. Impart to children that school is the priority. And meanwhile have faith that the local districts — and the State — are improving all the time.

A new way to meet

Do you look forward to your Parent - Teacher Conference? We didn't think so.

The time-honored interviews between parents and their children's teachers have, for too long, been constructed in a way that isn't very parent friendly.

"So often, we roll things forward year after year without really evaluating them to see if there is another way," said Superintendent Mark Laurrie.

To address this issue, meetings were held with Niagara Falls Teachers (NFT) to discuss better options. Starting in spring, it is anticipated that Parent Teacher Conferences will look a little different, and be better for parents and guardians.

Teachers will be asked to go to a community site - maybe a park or the library, and meet parents there, at a neutral site that is friendlier, more informal, and easier for parents.

What was wrong with the old way?

The District recognizes that, although parents and guardians are always welcome to make an appointment to talk with teachers, the formal invitation to a conference usually meant "come to the school between these specific hours on this specific day." That isn't always a convenient model for parents, who may not live near the school.

Furthermore, some residents may not have had an enjoyable experience during their own formal education. For some, the school building itself is an unwelcome environment. They didn't enjoy going to school in the past; they don't want to go there now.

They shouldn't have to.

Not wanting to go back inside a classroom should not be a barrier to communicating

with teachers. The communication is important. The location is not.

The physical arrangement even of furniture in a traditional conference can be off-putting to some people. Teachers are often seated at their desks--naturally-- and that big desk is the only big desk in the room. That leaves the parents standing or seated in a student desk. That hardly feels natural to a full grown adult and in some cases, is downright uncomfortable.

NFT has been open to the idea of conducting the spring conferences in this more parent-friendly way. And in the future?

"I wouldn't mind seeing more students join in the conference, especially older students, grades five, six, seven, and so on," Superintendent Mark Laurrie said. "It

seems odd, when you think about it, to have a meeting about a student's progress without the student. How logical is that?"

More information will be forthcoming closer to spring as this idea takes firmer shape. In the meantime, parent or guardian communication with teachers is important, and face-to-face isn't the only way to do it. All District staff have email. Use the first initial followed by the last name @nfschools.net, in most cases. For example, jsmith@nfschools.net.

In addition, you can leave a voicemail for a teacher any time. Call the office and ask to be placed in a teacher's voicemail to avoid interrupting instructional time.

The good old-fashioned hand-written note is also welcome.

Around the District



♦ Summer camps and programs were very popular this year and Summer STEM was among the most popular. Students learned some coding and worked with robotics. *Photos: above left, Max Barto and Evan DalPorto. Above right, Zaria Booker and Yazmin Bruder.*

♦ At the conclusion of the last school year, we celebrated the opening of the new playground at 79th Street Elementary School. That project was

made possible by a grant provided by State Senator Robert Ort. The Senator has announced that he has secured another such grant to replicate the project. Plans are in process for playground at Cataract Elementary School.

♦ Many thanks to Veronica Schucker and her students, and Joseph Schmidt, Niagara County Community College Audio Recording and Production, who performed and laid down tracks for newborns.

The tracks are now given on thumb drives to parents living in Niagara Falls whose babies are delivered at Niagara falls Memorial Medical Center or Mount St. Mary Hospital. The music is part of the Welcome to the World baby packet with which the District greets newborn future Wolverines. The packet also includes a Wolverine bib embroidered with the

predicted graduation year: Future Wolverine; Class of 2035. Also included are information on literacy and pre-kindergarten.

The District is grateful for the partnership with the hospitals.



Above, Sophia Brass, Adrianna Antonacci, Ava Luchese, and Stefania Tantillo at Summer STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) Camp at Cataract Elementary School in August.

Curriculum & Instruction Update from Summer 2017

Staff who work 12 months in the District frequently are asked what exactly we are doing during summer months. Here is an answer from the Curriculum and Instruction Office.

Summer? There were no leisurely days in Curriculum Office! Here are some of the highlights from Summer 2017:

- The District's second year of the Elementary Summer Extended Learning Program (ELP) included several changes. Four sites served 714 Niagara Falls students about to enter grades one through six. A full day program was created for 2017, which included three hours of academic remediation and enrichment in the morning, and three hours of recreational activities in the afternoon.

The Boys and Girls Club of Niagara Falls partnered with the NFCSD to combine study in core subjects with the arts and physical education. Students tackled challenging reading, writing, and mathematics projects, worked with individualized tutorial software, and dabbled in the arts, including a two-week music enrichment camp for intermediate grade

students. We're looking forward to adding even more enhanced opportunities for the summer of 2018!

- All schools, and the District Central Office, completed District and School Improvement Plans for the 2017-2018 school year. The plans, posted on our web sites, set improvement goals and action steps, as well as outline professional development and programming aimed at improving students' academic achievement at all levels. They are vital to the continued growth of our students, not only academically, but socially and emotionally. Each plan includes programming to address the needs of our families and children beyond basic academic supports.

- Thirty-five committees of teachers at all levels, elementary, prep, and high school, worked to upgrade curriculum and assessment throughout the district. Just a few examples are listed below:

- Elementary grades K-5 adopted a new math program, Investigations 3. All math curriculum maps were aligned to the new resources and assessment protocols were revised.

- Teachers in grades 3, 4, and 5 created guidance documents and instructional recommendations for other classroom teachers to use to prepare students for CBT, or Computer-Based Testing. Over the next few years, all New York State pupils will begin to take State assessments online, rather than in paper booklets. The NFCSD has invested in one-to-one classroom computers for all students and we are committed to ensuring our students are well prepared for the shift to CBT.

- A steering committee of teachers from all levels met to begin planning the District transition to the recently adopted New York State Science Learning Standards. The new Standards will be phased in a few grades at a time, and focus heavily on engineering. The dedicated work our staff has done on our STEM programming will make our adoption of the standards much easier.

- Two new courses for NFHS students, both social studies electives, were created.

- August was packed with multiple training opportunities for teachers. More than one hundred elementary teachers begin training for the Investigations Mathematics program. Grade 4 teachers received introductory sessions on using Journeys as a main ELA resource, which included a session which focused exclusively on use of digital resources for teachers and students. Elementary special class teachers attended multiple workshops to refine their use of the REACH program, an English Language Arts resource for students who struggle with reading and writing.

From the Archives

And you said you'd never use that!

This bit of fun brought to you by the New York State eleventh year mathematics Regents exam, administered June 16, 1969:

Airplane A leaves Chicago, Illinois, on a flight plan to New York City at the same time that airplane B leaves St. Louis, Missouri, on a flight plan to New York City. The directions of the two flight plans make an angle of $55^{\circ} 40'$ with each other. At a given instant, airplane A is 120 miles away from New York City while airplane B is 200 miles away. Find to the nearest mile the distance between planes at this instant.

What have you just learned? That when you high school-aged children say they feel stressed, they probably do.

The answer is 165. But you knew that.



Looking Ahead

- November 7
Elementary half day;
Parent-Teach. Conf.
- November 8
Prep half day; Parent-
Teach. Conf.
- November 9
BOE Review Session 5:30
p.m.
- November 10
Veterans Day No School
- November 14
PSAT administered at
NFHS 8 a.m.
- November 16
BOE Regular Meeting 7
p.m.
- November 18
District wide Parent Tech
Night 6 p.m. at NSS
- November 23 - 24
Thanksgiving Recess
- November 28
DPC Meeting Central Of-
fice 5:30 p.m.

October is National Anti-Bullying Month

October is National Anti-Bullying Month. A student's ability to learn and meet high academic standards is compromised by incidents of bullying and harassment. Far worse, bullied students may be more likely to suffer low self-esteem, depression, even suicidal thoughts or actions.

A State law called the Dignity for All Students Act protects all public elementary and secondary students. The law prohibits the harassment and discrimination of students. That is a fine start, but we all know that technology today has allowed bullying to reach into the home, and to take place any time, day or night via social media or text message.

We also know a State law does not automatically eliminate bullying.

The District encourages parents and guardians to educate themselves as much as possible about bullying and to talk regularly with their children about how they are feeling and what, if any, bullying behavior they see or are experiencing.

If you know of a child being bullied, you are encouraged to contact the school that child attends. The sooner adults have information, the sooner they can address it.

The District takes seriously the responsibility we have, as adults in children's lives, to model appropriate behavior, to be a resource for a child in need, and to hold accountable those who harm others. We thank the greater community for supporting and joining in this work.

Here is a refresher on bullying; this information may provide a way to begin talking to your child about the issue.

There are five types of bullying:
verbal
physical
social
extortion
cyberbullying.

With respect to cyberbullying, children should understand that a victim's embarrassment and fear can reach a potentially unbearable level, when so many people are involved in or witness the abuse. If your child sees bullying on-line, they should tell an adult who can step in.

Parents should remember that children who witness abuse are also affected by it. It is important to make sure a child feels comfortable sharing experiences and feelings with someone who makes him or her feel safe.

Each school has designated individuals who are trained in the Dignity For All Students Act and are also ready to help. The principal and/or school counselor is a good place to start.

Resources For On-line Safety

The National Center For Missing and Exploited Children® (NCMEC) offers guidance to help parents and guardians navigate the cyber world and teach children how to take care of themselves.

NetSmartz® Workshop is a program of NCMEC that creates interactive, educational safety resources for children ages 5 to 17. Through age-appropriate activities, games, videos and safety presentations, NetSmartz prepares children to behave responsibly when confronted with issues such as cyberbullying, inappropriate content, online exploitation, revealing too much information, sexting and scams.

Visit www.missingkids.org/NetSmartz for information.

October 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2 NFHS Senior Retakes	3 79th St. Cookie Dough Sale - 10/16	4	5 NSS Picture Day	6 79th St. Picture Day	7
8	9 Columbus Day No School	10 79th St. PEG Mtg. 6:30 p.m.	11	12 UNYTS Blood Drive at NFHS . HP PEG 6 p.m. NFHS Parent Mtg. 6:30 p.m.	13	14 NFHS PSAT administered 8 a.m.
15	16	17 GPS PEG 6:30 p.m.	18 District-wide Parent Tech Night at NSS	19 BOE Rev. Mtg. 5:30 p.m. Kalfas Picture Day	20	21
22	23 NFHS School Underclass Retakes HP Picture Day	24 DPC Meeting Central Office 5:30 p.m.	25	26 Board of Education Regular Mtg. 7 p.m.	27 NFHS Pops Concert 6 p.m. Main Arena	28
29	30	31				