



# Your Public Schools Niagara Falls, NY



Empire State Advantage Gold Level Awardee

September 2017

Community Newsletter

Volume 3 Issue 1

## Welcome Back - New Communication Tools

Welcome to the 2017 -2018 academic year.

During summer months, we have been busy preparing to welcome students and families back.

One area we have focused on is our communication with parents, students, and the community at large. We have a few new tools to tell you about.

**Our mobile app:** Please visit your Google Playstore or Apple App Store to download our District app. This handy app will provide one location to follow our social media feeds, access Parent Portal, see flyers from your child's school, and view calendars. Just download BB District and then search for Niagara Falls CSD. You can follow the District and choose specific schools to follow, as well. Receive notifications, see pictures and more!

**Peachjar:** The District has contracted with Peachjar, which provides a virtual repository for flyers. Sign up with Peachjar for free to receive your school and District flyers. Stop sticking your head in that bookbag looking for stray pieces of paper! More environmentally friendly and more convenient, you can also access Peachjar flyers on our website or app.



Download our District app today!

Community groups should know that they can use Peachjar, too, in accordance with our District policy on flyer distribution. View that policy on our website at [www.nfschools.net](http://www.nfschools.net).

While school and parent groups can post flyers for free, outside groups will post flyers about free programs or activities at no cost. Programs or activities that do have a cost will result in a charge paid directly to Peachjar. (The District does not earn money in either case.) Please note that Peachjar will be used in lieu of paper flyers and notices.

**Social Media:** Please look for the District and our schools on Facebook and Twitter.

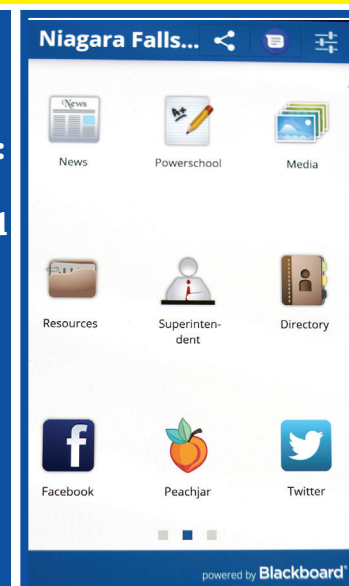
**A note about our app and snow days:** while the app is a great centralized tool for information, you should rely primarily on the automated message system (robo call) to hear about snow day cancelations. The "all call" is still the fastest, most direct messaging we have.

Keep your phone number current with the District!

While the District established a social media presence last year, many of our schools are joining now. Find us on Facebook at Niagara Falls City Schools and on Twitter @NiagFallsCSD.

**Our Website:** Our cyber home is due for an upgrade which it will receive this year. Visit us often at [www.nfschools.net](http://www.nfschools.net). Before too long our look will be fresh and our site more friendly.

**Calendars:** As you may know by now, this year we added a twist with our District calendar guide. Four different versions of the calendar were published, each featuring one of four highlighted subjects:



Download our District app today!

STEM, District Parents and Partners, Arts, and Athletics. While there is a limited supply of calendars, if you want a version other than the one you received, email us at [jglaser@nfschools.net](mailto:jglaser@nfschools.net). We will see what we can do.

**Parent Portal:** Please don't forget to use Parent Portal. With it, you can keep up to date on your child's attendance and grades. All you need is an email address, and some access information you can obtain from the school or Information Services in Central Office. Set up your free account to access the Portal right through our app via Powerschool. There is a link to instructions on our website.

## For students, summer was time to learn

During summer months, hundreds of students voluntarily participated in District organized summer activities.

The Extended Learning Program held sessions at air-conditioned District schools -- Cataract, Abate, Niagara Street, and Kalfas elementary schools. Students kept their academic skills sharp in the morning, then enjoyed lunch followed by recreational time in the afternoon.

The afternoon portion was run by the Boys and Girls Club.

An additional benefit for participants was that they could attend the nearest school, not necessarily their school-year home. Therefore, they had the opportunity to meet new friends, with whom they will likely attend prep school in a few years.

Other students chose to specialize their summer learning by attending a camp at Cataract Elementary School focused on one area.

Depending on grade level, participants took advantage of Robotics (grades seven to nine), Coding (grades five to six), or STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) (grades one to four) camps, which were held for a week in August.

The creatively-inspired in grades five and six took part in Art Camp at Abate School. The month long program provided District students the chance to explore fine arts, choral, drama, and music.

Summer Camp at Niagara Falls High School, a perennial favorite, was busy again, offering baseball, basketball, bowling, football, hockey, tennis,



Rhamell Jackson and Brandon Ralands do some reading at Niagara Street School in August.

swimming, volleyball, wrestling and theater.

Students in prep and high schools took advantage of the facilities at Niagara Falls High School, as well as free lunch and transportation. Indeed, lunch and transport were a feature of nearly all the summer offerings, which were free for participants.

"This is the greatest number of summer activities we have ever offered," said Superintendent Mark Laurrie. "We hope to offer at least as many again in summer 2018."

"It's good for students to remain engaged and productive over summer break."

(photos page 3)

### From the Superintendent



**Mark Laurrie**

Welcome to the new school year. Many of us--and many of you--were busy in the District throughout the summer. After a very successful and greatly expanded summer program, we are ready for a successful academic year.

In June, of 431 potential graduates for 2017, 398 graduated on June 24th. That is a rate of 92.34% and we anticipate that more students will have completed their graduation requirements by August, allowing them to official become 2017 alumni. We are proud of our graduates and continue to work toward a 100% graduation rate.

I have identified goals for the upcoming year; I want them share them with you and invite you to monitor our progress.

I want to increase the number of Pre-Kindergarten classes available to three-year-old students. Established classes have been very successful and, I believe, will show a benefit throughout these students' academic careers.

I am committed to enhancing our Response to Intervention program, which is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs.

At the request of the community and students, I want to start a Healthy Bodies/Healthy Behavior curriculum starting in grade five. This will include a community-based health clinic.

I want to study and pilot a restorative justice program, create a diploma with an Endorsement For All, and complete our scheduled math and science curriculum renewal. Additionally, it's time to study concepts for a magnet school, performing arts school, and trades school.

We will also be bringing the community a referendum in December to approve expenditure for capital projects, many of which are related to our State-mandated Building Conditions Survey. You will hear more on that next month.

There are many more objectives that have been identified for 2017 - 2018. Please join me in accomplishing them.

### From the Board



**Nick Vilardo**

Welcome to the new school year. During summer months, hundreds of children participated in summer programming. It was very

heartening to see so many families deciding that learning is a priority and so many children enjoying their extra time in school with friends.

Now that we are officially back in session, I hope all families will participate in the many school and District-wide activities that are held throughout the year.

Of particular note are the Technology Nights held around the District; the first will be next month, October 18 at Niagara Street School. It is worth your time to plan to attend. You can learn about all the technology tools available to parents and guardians to help keep an eye on grades, attendance, and events.

This month, we will welcome men--fathers, grandfathers, uncles, brothers, pastors--whoever is of primary importance in the life

of a child. Moms are welcome, too! Join us at your child's elementary school Tuesday September 19 at the regular drop-off time. You will be welcomed for a cup of coffee and a breakfast treat while you spend a little time in the school environment. The event is designed to promote the involvement of men not only inside the school, but to encourage them to take an active interest in their child's education throughout the year. Research tells us it is highly important for both parents to be involved to ensure student success.

Autumn is time for football. Come support your Wolverines on the beautiful complex that is home field.

I am pleased to serve as the president of the Board of Education this school year, and to spend extra time in the District. You will find a reason for the whole family to spend time in the District, too, almost every month of the year--from the Literacy, Math & Technology Fair in November to the Cataract City Classic in December to the art show in May. Join in! It's wonderful to see you!

### Story time!



The second Storyhour with the Superintendent was held over the summer. Spike the Wolverine joined Mark Laurrie at the LaSalle Branch on Buffalo Avenue to read children's storybooks about camping, before participating in a craft and scavenger hunt.

Spike hung around for photo opps with some of the "campers," including a friend who needed a hug, above right, and Jude, at right.

Storyhours at the Earl Brydges and LaSalle branches of the Niagara Falls Public Library will be held from time to time, in partnership with the library. Special thanks to Michele Timby for helping us coordinate the project.



**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.**



## Cornell Cooperative Extension

Harvesting Healthy Back to School Habits

By Jennifer Tynan, School Coordinator-Creating Healthy Schools and Communities  
Power up with Breakfast!

Did you know your body never turns off, even when you sleep? So, after a long night's rest, you need to refuel with breakfast.

Breakfast helps to:

1. Power up your body and your brain
2. Give your body energy
3. Feed your brain so you can listen in class, get your schoolwork done, and even do better on tests.

Beginning your day without breakfast is like trying to fly a kite without any wind- it's hard to get started and even harder to keep going. Start your day off right with these quick and tasty breakfast ideas:

- Try a cereal mix-up  
Combine two or more of your favorite cereals, hot or cold, you pick. Mix in some fresh

fruit like a sliced banana or dried fruit like raisins and top with milk or yogurt.

- Flip out with pancakes or waffles. The frozen kinds are quick and easy to make. Try whole grain waffles if you haven't before. Top them with syrup, fruit, applesauce or peanut butter.

- Slurp down a breakfast smoothie.

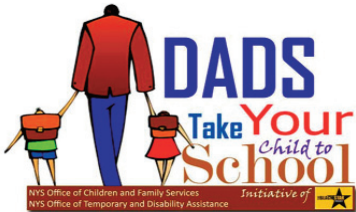
Blend together 1 ripe banana, 6 pineapple chunks, ½ cup orange juice, ¾ cup low-fat vanilla yogurt and 1 ½ cups fresh Spinach. Add ice to make it cool and slushy.

- Grab and go  
Before you head out, grab a few of these foods: cereal bar, bagel, muffin, piece of fruit, box of raisins, cheese stick, juice pouch or a cup of applesauce or yogurt.

- The school breakfast program is also a great option!

Start your school-year off right with a healthy breakfast routine!

## Dads Take Your Child To School Day September 19



The date has been set for the 2017 Dads Take Your Child To School Day (DTYCTSD). Dads, men, interested moms and community members, please join us on **SEPTEMBER 19, 2017** for our annual event!

The Statewide event welcome dads and men of importance in the lives of children to school for a brief welcome, and a chance to meet a child's principal, and to fellowship with other men.

The event in Niagara Falls has been an ever-growing success, with more than 1,000 guests taking part last year.

While each school community has its own culture and space, and will organize its own specific event, in general, participants will have a similar experience. Every elementary school will have greeters from the community, such as elected officials, police officers or Boy Scout leaders. Each will have a door prize or two that a participant may win.

Men will be asked to sign in and will receive a welcome. Coffee and light breakfast fare will be available. This is a free event designed to welcome men to be active, engaged participants in children's education. In general, participants can expect the event to take about an hour.

### What is it?

This is a State-wide event welcoming to encouraging men to be active participants in children's education. Typically, men arrive at elementary schools with the students at about 8:45 a.m. They are invited in for coffee and a snack, a brief welcome, and fellowship. Guest greeters will be at every elementary school. Each site will have at least one door prize.

### Who will be there?

Elected officials, law enforcement officers, representatives from community agencies, our Board Of Education, and representatives of the Boy Scouts of America (Eagle Scouts) are some of guests who will welcome men to school. The event usually concludes within an hour. Each school site will have a slightly different program, as each school is different.

### Who is participating?

Participating partners include Catholic Academy of Niagara Falls. Community partners who will be there and/or have donated door prizes and /or are helping to spread the word include: the Boy Scouts of America, the Buffalo Bills, the Buffalo Sabres, the Carousel Museum, Four Seasons Cinema, Family &



Children's Services of Niagara, Family Resource Center, Niagara Falls Community Development, the Niagara Falls Housing Authority, Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center, Niagara Falls Police Department, Niagara County Legislature, and the Niagara County Sheriff.

This is an opportunity to see our schools and show children that the whole community cares about them. It is also, and most importantly, an opportunity to make ALL men who are part of students' lives feel welcome and comfortable. Students carry on their normal school day activities throughout the event, but many are very proud to have their special guy at their school!

### Why?

Research shows some powerful, positive effects of men being involved in children's schools, including students receiving higher grades, being less likelihood to drop out, or repeating a grade.

Statistics from the State Dads Take Your Child To School Day website. 71% of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes— nine times the national average.

85% of all youth in prison come from fatherless homes. That's 20 times the national average. Children living in two-parent households with a positive relationship with their father are 32% less likely to smoke, drink or use drugs compared to all teens in two-parent households.

Adolescent girls raised with involved fathers are significantly less likely to be sexually active.

Boys whose fathers are present in the household are two times less likely to go to prison as boys with fathers that are absent.

**NIAGARA FALLS COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER  
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS  
6040 LINDBERGH AVENUE  
NIAGARA FALLS, NEW YORK 14304  
(716) 286-0771**

Dorothy L. Brundidge  
School Administrator

The Niagara Falls City School District is committed to life-long learning and through the Community Education Center offers programs for people of all ages. Our course list contains opportunities for participation in activities that promote physical fitness, the use of technology and other special interests during the Fall Term of 2017.

Please note that we are interested in expanding the number of future course offerings and invite community experts who are willing to share their expertise to contact the Community Education Center.

Registration begins on August 28, 2017. If you have any questions, or would like more information about a specific program, please call us at 716-286-0771.

DAILY PROGRAMS O/N BOCES  
Adult Basic Education/ TASC™  
English as a Second Language  
National External Diploma Program  
Home Health Aide (HHA)

**\*\*ADULT BASIC EDUCATION/HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY**

This course is designed for the adult learner interested in completing their High School Equivalency diploma. It is also recommended for anyone who has been away from school for a long period of time or for those who feel they need prior preparation for the TASC (Test Assessing Secondary Completion) Exam. The course reviews the basics of Writing, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science and Reading. Applications are available at the Community Education Center. The course and TASC exam are free of charge. New York State has selected a new high school equivalency test called the TASC™ to replace the GED® as the primary pathway to a NYS High School Equivalency Diploma.

Monday through Friday 8:30 – 11:30 or 12:00 - 3:00  
Tuesday & Thursday 5:00 – 8:00 pm  
Stephanie Bevacqua Call for information: 716-286-0768

**\*\*ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE FOR THE FOREIGN BORN**

Developed for the adult learner to read, write, and speak the English Language.

Monday through Friday 8:30 am – 11:30 pm or 12:00 pm – 3:00 pm  
Sarah Wright Call for information: 716-286-0772

**\*\*NATIONAL EXTERNAL DIPLOMA PROGRAM (NEDP)**

This is a non-instructional program that incorporates a variety of assessment techniques, which are designed for the adult learner who has acquired academic skills through life experiences. The techniques include home projects, performance assessments, interviewing and documentation review. NEDP provides competent adults with the opportunity to earn a regular, High School diploma. Qualifications: 21 years and older.

Erica Kopp Call for information: 716-278-8154  
Stephanie Bevacqua Call for information: 716-286-0768

**HHA – Home Health Aide**

A one month program (4-5 weeks) of 105 clinical hours (75 hrs theory class and 30 hrs clinical) with a final exam. Students become trained and certified health-care worker who provides assistance to a patient in the home with personal care (as hygiene and exercise) and light household duties (as meal preparation) and who monitors a patient’s condition.

Contact Terry Josker @ 731-4176 ext. 4445

**FITNESS ACTIVITIES**

**SWIMNASTICS**

Have fun getting fit with stretching, toning, water exercise in the pool. This program is suitable for those with or without swimming background. Experience increased flexibility, stomach, and cardiovascular benefits. (Limit 12) Each class is \$30.00.

|                 |          |                        |         |
|-----------------|----------|------------------------|---------|
| Susana Nicholas | CEC Pool | Mon 10:00 am-11:00 am  | \$30.00 |
| Susana Nicholas | CEC Pool | Mon 11:00am-12:00 pm   | \$30.00 |
| Susana Nicholas | CEC Pool | Tues 9:00am-10:00 am   | \$30.00 |
| Susana Nicholas | CEC Pool | Tues 10:00am-11:00 am  | \$30.00 |
| Susana Nicholas | CEC Pool | Wed 11:00am- 12:00 pm  | \$30.00 |
| Susana Nicholas | CEC Pool | Thurs 10:00am-11:00 am | \$30.00 |
| Susana Nicholas | CEC Pool | Thurs 11:00am-12:00 pm | \$30.00 |

**WATERWALKING**

Exercise your entire body with added benefit of water resistance. One-half hour equals two hours of street walking. (Limit 10)

|                 |          |               |         |
|-----------------|----------|---------------|---------|
| Susana Nicholas | CEC Pool | Mon Noon-1 pm | \$30.00 |
| Susana Nicholas | CEC Pool | Wed Noon-1 pm | \$30.00 |

**CHAIR EXERCISES FOR SENIORS**

A total body workout including strength & toning for abs, legs and arms, all done while sitting. Improves balance and mobility. The program uses elastic bands, balls or you may bring your weights.

|                 |         |                     |         |
|-----------------|---------|---------------------|---------|
| Susana Nicholas | CEC Gym | Wed 10:00am-11:00am | \$25.00 |
|-----------------|---------|---------------------|---------|

**INTRODUCTION TO COMPUTERS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS** - If learning how to use a computer is something you have been putting off, this is the class for you! This class is designed as an introduction to computers for beginning students ...like you! Class starts with "Here's the on button." You will become familiar with the very basics that include parts of the computer, how to use the mouse, games, searching the Internet & email. Class size will be limited to a small group for more one-on-one help and instruction. (Maximum of 7, minimum of 5 students required for each class.)

|               |         |                     |         |
|---------------|---------|---------------------|---------|
| Carol Hartwig | CEC 205 | Tues 3:00pm-5:00 pm | \$45.00 |
|---------------|---------|---------------------|---------|

**CROCHET CLASS** – Do you hate cold winters? Do you want to learn a way to pass the time that will help keep you warm throughout those long cold days? If you answered "Yes" to these questions then grab your crochet hook and come learn to crochet. We will make squares of different stitches and put them together to make a lap-ghan to help keep you warm! The supplies needed are: 1 crochet hook Size H & 4 skeins (7 oz) of your favorite colored worsted weight yarn.

|                   |     |                    |         |
|-------------------|-----|--------------------|---------|
| Christine Goodwin | CEC | Tues 6:00pm-7:30pm | \$45.00 |
|-------------------|-----|--------------------|---------|

**REGISTRATION**

The Fall Term begins on September 11, 2017. Classes are held for 10 consecutive weeks unless otherwise noted. Classes will not be held on: Monday, Oct 9, 2017 – Columbus Day; November 10, 2017 – Veterans Day

Registration by mail is preferred and will only be accepted with a postmark PRIOR to the start of classes from September 11, 2017 – November 22, 2017. There will be no registration on the first day of class. Please make checks or money orders payable to: Niagara Falls City School District

NO CASH WILL BE ACCEPTED & there is a \$30.00 charge for returned checks

Please forward registration and payment to:

Niagara Falls Community Education Center  
 ATTN: Julia Destino  
 6040 Lindbergh Avenue  
 Niagara Falls, New York 14304

You may register in person from August 28, 2017 through September 6, 2017 in the Community Education Center Main Office from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm.

**FEES:** As a self-sustaining division of the Niagara Falls City School District, all costs for instructors and staff are covered by course fees. Fees must be paid at time of registration. Residents of the City of Niagara Falls who are 65 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER may register in some courses for a fee of \$25.00 (exclusive of textbooks and/or supplies). Please refer to the course listing for the fees required.

**CLASS CANCELLATIONS:** Classes may be canceled or rescheduled if enrollment is low or if an instructor becomes unavailable. If classes are canceled due to weather conditions, the community will be notified by local television and radio stations.

**REFUNDS:**

Refunds will be issued only in the following circumstances:

- A. If a course is canceled – total refund.
- B. If you withdraw one week prior to the start of class – refund, less \$3.
- C. If you withdraw during the first or second week of class – refund, less \$6.
- D. No refunds will be issued after the second week of class.
- E. To receive a refund you must notify the Community Education Center Office of your intent to withdraw from the class.

Please Remember:

- Register from August 28, 2017 – September 6, 2017
- There will be no registration on first day of class
- Make checks and/or money orders payable to: Niagara Falls City School District
- If you have questions, please call 286-0771

**NIAGARA FALLS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT – REGISTRATION FORM**

Make Check Payable to: Niagara Falls City School District or N.F.C.S.D.  
 Send to: Niagara Falls Community Education Center  
 ATTN: Julia Destino, 6040 Lindbergh Avenue, Niagara Falls, New York 14304

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Last Name    First Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Mailing Address    City                      Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Telephone    Alternative No.                      Senior (65 yrs) Y / N

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Course Title    Location    Day/Time    Fee & Check/ M.O. #

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How Do I Contact District Staff?

The District appreciates that working with your children means being responsible to you for their well being when they are in our care. We also understand that many parents work hours that make contacting schools or staff members challenging.

You should know that you can always communicate with your child's teachers or any other member of staff. Here are three ways to do that no matter how busy your schedule.

**1. Leave a voicemail.** You can call a school after hours and leave a voicemail to be forwarded to the correct individual. You can also call during the day and ask to be told the individual's direct extension. Leave a message anytime without disturbing class by calling 286.4101 and entering the extension when prompted. (A list of Central office extensions is in your calendar guide.)

**2. Send an email.** Every employee has access to District email. In most cases, the address is

firstinitiallastname@nfschools.net

for example, Mary Jones would be

mjones@nfschools.net.

In some cases, two people may have similar names

which changes their email addresses, for example, Joseph Smith and John Smith. If you are unsure about the correct email address, call the school and ask specific questions.

**3. Send a good old fashioned note.** If technology is not your comfort zone, don't forget: you can always send a note to school put one in the mail. The important thing is that you communicate when you need to share information or ask questions.

The District understands that while the 7,200 individuals who attend our schools are our students, they are your children. We appreciate parental concerns about education and encourage you to reach out.

**What to do if: You have an issue with an adult (employee) at your child's school.**

Start by addressing the issue with the adult in question. If no satisfactory resolution is reached, contact the school principal for assistance. If there is still no resolution, contact Administration. Each school has a "Guardian Angel" in Administration to assist. The Superintendent's Office oversees this function. The next step would be the Superintendent herself and finally, the Board of Education. Most issues are easily resolved through dialogue following this protocol.

**You suspect your child may have a learning disability.**

Contact the Committee on Special Education. Requests for a child to be evaluated for a learning disability can come from a teacher or a parent. The Niagara Falls City School District provides Special Education services to children from 3 to 21 years of age. Services are recommended by the Committee on Special Education (ages 5-21) and the Committee on Preschool Special Education (ages 3-5).

**You have a question about busing.**

State-subsidized bus transportation is provided free to all children grades Pre-K through 12 who live more than 1.5 miles from the schools they attend.

Public and non-public school students do not need to apply. Eligibility will automatically be determined by computer registration at the students' respective schools.

If you have questions regarding your child's transportation, please feel free to contact the Transportation Office at 286-4239.

**You require transcripts.**

The Records Office at Community Education Center houses transcripts from Niagara Falls High School, LaSalle Senior High School, and Trott Vocational High School.

Your transcripts are available to be sent to you or on your behalf. Once three copies have been sent to you, or on your behalf, a \$3.00 fee will be charged for each transcript request.

Most colleges require an official copy to be sent directly to them. For other purposes, such as employment, unofficial copies can be sent to you or directly to the recipient.

Contact Records at 286-4256.

You can also fax your request Attn: Records to (716) 286-4124, or mail it to:

NFCSD  
Attn: Records  
Community Ed. Center  
6040 Lindbergh  
Niagara Falls, NY 14304

## Around the District

◆ Niagara Falls High School students had another successful year in receiving Certifications in Word, Excel, and PowerPoint from Microsoft.

All students who qualified in class to take a Certification Test passed them at the SUNY Attain Lab in the Doris Jones Resource Center.

Thirty-five certifications were achieved: 17 in Word; eight in Excel; and 10 in PowerPoint.

The Microsoft Office Specialist Course is an excellent offering for the students at Niagara Falls High School. Mastery of the Microsoft family of products will assist both the students who plan on attending college and the students who plan on immediately entering the workforce. The certification looks great on a college application and/or job resume. Any student who receives an 85% or higher in the course is eligible for a college credit at Niagara County Community College (NCCC).

Thank you to Joseph Brown for facilitating the free Certifi-

cation On-Line Exams at the SUNY Attain Lab in the Doris Jones Resource Center!

◆ Johanna Bolender hosted a familiar face last year in her grade six classroom. From the Niagara University Learn and Serve program, she welcomed former Gaskill student Gregory Gamble, who facilitated a classroom debate on whether emphasis on grades be abolished. Students researched and then debated.

"It was a great opportunity for the students as they learned to research and provide facts to support an argument," she said.

◆ In the spring, Board of Education Vice President Bob Restaino met Sharon Montgomery, and her special needs son, 29-year-old Josh. Asking about the Josh and whether his mother needed anything, Mr. Restaino learned that, although Ms. Montgomery didn't think of herself as in need of any help, she did mention that Josh had stopped using the stairs.



She suspects his depth of vision has weakened, but since Josh is non-verbal, she can't know for sure. That posed a challenge, because Josh's bedroom was on the second floor.

Mr. Restaino took up the cause, rallying volunteers to build a first floor bedroom for Josh. When it was completed, Advanced Placement Art Teacher Rob Lynch heard about it, and found some art students to help finish the room off.

Josh is a fan of sea life, going to the Aquarium of Niagara every weekend. Mr. Lynch and students Sandrea Evans, Makeala Molly, and Alex Dixon arrived at the Montgomery home ready to spend the next five or six hours creating a space Josh would enjoy.

Josh loves his room and Ms. Montgomery is pleased and impressed with teacher and students.

"Those kids were so sweet and worked so hard. I just can't believe this happened."

## FERPA

### Notification of Rights under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Schools

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate.

Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the School principal [or appropriate school official], clearly

identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an

attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administer FERPA are:

Family Policy  
Compliance Office  
U.S. Department  
of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

### Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupils Rights Amendment (PPRA)

Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

\* Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.

\*Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.

\*Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described below.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy  
Compliance Office  
U.S. Department  
of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

## Delayed Start Plan

Although the last winter wasn't too bad, the season can be harsh. As a result of the winter of 2015, during which many snow days were used, the District drew up a Delayed School Start Plan an alternative to full snow days. On days that begin with bitter cold but that warm up as the sun shines, a delayed start might be preferable to using a snow day.

If or whether schools may ever start on a delayed plan is unknown; the goal is to put student and staff safety first, while preserving instructional time to the greatest extent possible.

In the event of a delayed start, notification will come from the District automated telephone broadcast system, just like a snow day.

Elementary schools would start at 10:45 a.m.; prep schools at 9:35 a.m., and high school at 10:15 a.m. Bussing will be provided according, just like a normal day. Students will pick up the bus that much later at the normal stops.

For example, elementary school normally starts at 8:45 a.m. A delayed start would be 10:45 a.m., or 2 hours later. Therefore busses will arrive 2 hours later than usual.

For prep schools, which usually start at 7:30, a 9:35 a.m. start would mean busses arrive 2 hours and five minutes later, and so on.

Out of District bussing would continue at normal times. Students at high school taking morning classes at BOCES would report to NFHS and be supervised until classes begin.

Schools will offer a continental type breakfast in the event of a delayed start.

Each level of school (elementary, prep, and high) will determine how to structure the remainder of the day. For example, having the usual number of class periods but shortening each versus eliminating some periods and keeping the regular length for the remaining periods.

For NFHS only: during NFHS exam week, the District will not utilize a delayed start for high school.

Staff please note: in the event of a delayed start, the Custodial staff will report at regular times; the kitchen staff will report two hours later than normal start, e.g., 5:00 a.m. staff reports at 7:00 a.m.

While we are hopeful to have another mild and manageable winter, we are glad to have this option available.

For those affected, please note: in the event of a delayed start, parochial schools will follow the District schedule.

As always, it is very important to keep your contact information current with your

child(ren)'s school(s). This is important not only for weather-related closures, but for any occasion that requires the school to contact a parent or guardian.

You may also choose to



*It's coming.  
We know it's coming.*

share your email, so you can receive information

## Safety Corner

It is AGAINST THE LAW to pass a school bus which has flashing red lights. State law requires that drivers must STOP when the school bus red lights are flashing, even when the bus is: in a parking lot, on school grounds, on a multiple lane roadway, on the opposite side of a divided highway.

Safety First!

**Penalties are serious and can range from \$250 - \$400 and 30 days in jail for a first conviction.**

Please **do not call to your children to cross the street** at dismissal, rather, escort them to your vehicle.

# PLEASE: Return the Lunch Application!

## Looking Ahead

October 9  
Columbus Day No School

October 14  
PSAT administered at  
NFHS 8 a.m.

October 18  
District wide Parent Tech  
Night 6 p.m. at NSS

October 19  
BOE Review Session 5:30  
p.m.

October 24  
DPC Meeting Central Of-  
fice 5:30 p.m.

October 26  
BOE Regular Meeting 7  
p.m.

Welcome to the new school year! We need your help in completing the HOUSEHOLD INCOME ELIGIBILITY FORM. This form is used to determine funding that the Niagara Falls City Schools receives.

All households need to complete the HOUSEHOLD INCOME ELIGIBILITY FORM, regardless of income levels. It is important that we receive one application, per household, that lists all students. This form needs to be filled out and returned to your **youngest child's school** by **September 15, 2017**.

Because the District was successful in the past at getting these lunch applications submitted, it became eligible for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) that is available to the State of New York.

What does this mean for you and your children attending the public school(s) in the District?

- ALL students attending the public schools in the Niagara Falls City School District are eligible to receive a healthy breakfast AND lunch at school at NO CHARGE

to your household each day of the 2016-2017 school year.

- Your child(ren) will be able to participate in these meal programs without having to pay a fee.

- Your child will still have the option to purchase extra food items and healthy a la carte items daily in the cafeteria.

By completing the Household Eligibility Form you will assist us in remaining eligible for programs like this that benefit our students and their families.

The data gathered helps the District to qualify for grants that provide things like after school and summer programming, as well as being used to calculate certain District reimbursements from the State.

If we can be of assistance, please contact 716-286-4241.

### Financial Data Facts

#### What happens to your application?

School personnel collect applications and forward them to a designated person in Central Office. This individual enters the data in a secure, electronic environment. Hard copy applications are stored in a secured location and shredded after three years. NY State requires districts to store the applications for that time period, in case of audit. With the exception of the designated employee who enters the data, it is not accessible to District employees.

#### How does the District benefit?

Using the documented financial information: a the State sets our Districts reimbursement rate for capital projects a determines our qualifications to offer free meals to students a the District applies for many grants that fund summer camp and after school activities. Data collected from the lunch applications strengthens these grant applications.

# September 2017

| SUNDAY    | MONDAY   | TUESDAY   | WEDNESDAY  | THURSDAY   | FRIDAY   | SATURDAY  |
|-----------|--|---|--|--|--|---|
|           |  |   |  |  | <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b><br>Labor Day  | <b>5</b><br>Teachers Report<br>NFT Mtg/Faculty<br>Mtg. HP Open<br>House 4:30 -<br>6:30 p.m.   | <b>6</b><br>NSS Open House<br>4:30-6:30 p.m.<br>District-wide Pro-<br>fessional Develop-<br>ment Day | <b>7</b><br>First full day for<br>students K-12<br>GJM Open<br>House 5 - 7<br>p.m. Pre-K 3 and<br>4 Screening                              | <b>8</b><br>Pre-K 3 and 4<br>Screening   | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>10</b> | <b>11</b><br>Kalfas Book<br>Fairthrough 9/15<br>Pre-K 3 and 4<br>Screening | <b>12</b>   | <b>13</b>  | <b>14</b><br>OPEN HOUSES: 79th<br>St., Abate, NSS 5 to<br>7 p.m.; Maple 5:30-<br>7:30 p.m. Kalfas TBD;<br>GPS 6 to 8 p.m. HP<br>PEG 6 p.m. | <b>15</b>  | <b>16</b>   |
| <b>17</b> | <b>18</b><br>NFHS Underclass<br>Picture Day, also<br>9/19                  | <b>19</b><br>79th St. PEG Mtg.<br>6:30 p.m. CEC<br>Open House 4:30 -<br>6:30 p.m. GPS,<br>Maple PEG 6:30<br>p.m.<br> | <b>20</b>  | <b>21</b><br>BOE Rev.Mtg. 5:30<br>p.m.<br>79th St. Walk-a-<br>thon NFHS Open<br>House 6 to 8 p.m.  | <b>22</b><br>79th St. Walk-a-<br>thon Raindate   | <b>23</b>   |
| <b>24</b> | <b>25</b>  | <b>26</b><br>DPC Meeting<br>Central Office<br>5:30 p.m.   | <b>27</b>  | <b>28</b><br>Board of Educa-<br>tion Regular Mtg.<br>7 p.m. LPS Open<br>House 5:30 to 7:30<br>p.m. GPS Picture<br>Day                      | <b>29</b><br>NFHS/Prep: Stu-<br>dents half day;<br>Staff Dev.; Open<br>House 6 to 8 p.m.;<br>Homecoming Pep<br>Rally | <b>30</b><br>Homecoming<br>Dance<br> |