



Fall 2014

www.bbschools.org

## SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Byron-Bergen Community Members,

On behalf of the Board of Education, I would like to welcome you to the start of another school year. We have so many exciting things occurring in the District, and it is our goal to build on this momentum. Here's to the best year yet!

### POINTS OF PRIDE

- Named as an "Honorable Mention District of Character" by the Academy of Character Education.
- Ranked the #1 Elementary School in Genesee County by *Business First* for the third year in a row.
- Ranked first out of 22 districts for administrative efficiency by *Business First*.
- Our fourth-graders and Elementary Student Council championed yogurt as the New York State Snack.
- Ranked fourth out of 22 districts for most cost-effective per pupil expenditure by *Business First*.
- Improved the graduation rate by 15% over the past four years.
- This is the inaugural year of the Western New York Tech Academy.
- With the generous donation from Liberty Pumps, we have provided every student in the District with a LearnPad tablet.
- Over the past four years, the number of student suspensions has dropped by 120.
- 51 of our student athletes received All-Star recognition.
- Successfully merged wrestling and boys' soccer with Elba CSD, and swimming and indoor track with Le Roy CSD.
- Ranked second out of 22 districts for athletic success by *Business First*.
- Utica National Insurance Group awarded the District the Safety Excellence award for 12 consecutive years.
- Our music and fine arts programs continue to flourish.



*Joey Damick and his sister, Ava Strong remind us all that Bus Driver Appreciation Day is Oct. 24—our chance to tell our bus driver how much we appreciate everything they do to keep us safe. It's part of National School Bus Safety Week, Oct. 20-24.*

### CAPITAL RESERVE

Thank you to the community for supporting the establishment of the Capital Reserve Fund, by a vote of 171-41. This is a "savings account" so that we can responsibly plan for the future. Over the next two to three years, we are looking to build this account in order to address maintenance and improvements to the Elementary School, including upgrades to heating and electrical systems, security, classrooms, the cafeteria, and P.E. facilities. We also need to address improvements to our sports complex. Please note that a capital project must be voted on by the community before it may be completed. Please contact me if you are interested in sharing input on the plan.

### LEARNPAD TECHNOLOGY

We give our greatest heartfelt thanks to Liberty Pumps for their generous donation to fund the LearnPad Initiative with our students. The students and teachers have embraced this technology. We are excited to see how these tools will impact student learning and prepare them to take on the challenges of an ever-changing world. *(continued on p. 3)*



## Board President's Corner

I hope you all had an enjoyable and relaxing summer. I'd like to welcome everyone back for what will probably be a quick, but great, school year.

- We have had the recent privilege of hiring many new wonderful faculty and staff, and we are excited to welcome them to our Byron-Bergen family.
- I'd like to express our gratitude and thank the community for your support in passing the vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund. It is always good to establish a savings account for any voter-approved repairs that may need to be done on campus in the future.
- We will soon be conducting our Building and Conditions Study. This is a study that needs to be performed every three years as mandated by State law.
- Our budget process for the 2015-16 school year will also be starting shortly, along with a revisiting of our Strategic Plan.
- The Western New York Tech Academy is off and running—and going strong. It is so exciting that this is yet another opportunity for our students to succeed in choosing a career path for their future.
- Our boys' soccer program is the latest sports team to combine with Elba. The transition was seamless, as it has been with all the other teams that have come together. The SOAR Committees from Byron-Bergen and Elba continue to explore other opportunities for our students.
- And to our students here, I encourage you to take advantage and become involved by joining clubs, sports teams, participating in the arts and music venues that are at Byron-Bergen—it can be life changing.

Congratulations to Liz Findlay and Dave Keller who will be inducted into the Alumni Hall of Fame. They, as well as our past recipients, are wonderful examples of people who accomplish good things and pay it forward.

In closing, please take time to enjoy the beautiful colors of fall. On Veteran's Day, take the time to thank a military person. Have a blessed Thanksgiving with your family and friends.

*Debra List*

Debra List, President  
Byron-Bergen Board of Education



## Moving forward: Byron-Bergen CSD's new Strategic Plan

Where are we now? Where are we going? How will we get there? These are the key questions the Byron-Bergen Central School District will be asking our community over the next few months as we build our new five-year Strategic Plan. Why do we need a Strategic Plan?

1. To set direction and priorities
2. To get everyone on the same page
3. To guide and simplify decision-making
4. To align our resources effectively
5. To communicate the goals and encourage action

What's different is that, as a school district, we need your input, ideas and participation in order to set our goals. We need to know what is important to YOU and how you think the school district can best serve our next generations.

- Share your thoughts by filling out our online surveys at [www.bbschools.org](http://www.bbschools.org). We want to hear from our staff, our students and their parents, and our community.
- Attend strategic planning meetings.
- Speak with us! Email, or set up an appointment with Mr. Kosiorek to talk in person. We want to hear from every stakeholder. Appointments can be made by calling Patty Gunio at (585) 494-1220 ext. 2329.

We'll be talking to your neighbors and collecting information from everyone in our community over the next couple of months. Then we will analyze the results to understand where you see strengths and opportunities for the District. Finally, we will invite you to join us in formulating a strategy and setting SMART goals—specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound—that will guide us for the next five years.



*(continued from cover)*

## **NEW STRATEGIC PLAN**

The District is in the planning stages of its new strategic plan. We would like everyone and anyone who would like to share their ideas and vision for the next five years to join the Board of Education and the administration on October 22 at 7 p.m. in the Jr. /Sr. High School Cafeteria. We will be presenting an overview of the process and seeking your feedback on the District's future. We also encourage you to take our anonymous survey, located at the "New Strategic Plan" link on our website. If you would prefer a paper copy, please stop by the District Office. The deadline to take the survey is 11/1/14. If you would like to meet with me in person, please set up an appointment with my Secretary, Patty Gunio, at 494-1220 ext. 2329.

## **BULLYING PREVENTION**

As we continue to take a stance against bullying behavior, it is critical to establish a culture of good bystanders here at Byron-Bergen. Staff and students continue to be encouraged to intervene when they witness a situation that may look like bullying. Bullying is defined as:

***A mean or hurtful, on-purpose action that is repeated and involves an imbalance of power.***

## **SCHOOL FUNDING**

We have already begun the process of developing the 2015-2016 budget. Each year, this becomes a more cumbersome process. I commend the Board of Education and staff, as we continue to provide a high-quality education for our students. I thank our community for valuing the

education of our young people and supporting last year's spending plan. As we continue to advocate for our students, please join us for the School and Business Summit on Thursday, Nov. 6, starting at 7 p.m. at Batavia High School. Admission is free. The goal of this summit is to educate local businesses on the lack of funding for public schools and how it will directly impact them.

- Businesses need a skilled workforce, which is made possible by a quality education.
- A quality education requires proper funding from the State.
- Inadequate funding has resulted in the loss of programs, school closings, and fewer opportunities for their future workforce.

The guest speakers will be Dr. Rick Timbs, Executive Director of the Statewide School Finance Consortium; David Little, Executive Director of NYS Center for Rural Schools; and Sarah Noble-Moag, Director of Noblehurst Farms Inc.

It would be great if we could get a large number of attendees from the Byron-Bergen learning community!

Please remember that our staff and administration are always ready to answer any questions or concerns you might have. Thank you for your support in the education of our students. It is an honor and a privilege to serve this community as the Superintendent of Schools. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me at 494-1220 ext. 2829 or email me at: [ckosiorek@bbschools.org](mailto:ckosiorek@bbschools.org).



*(front l-r) Debra List, President, and Daniel Ireland, Vice President. Standing: Trustee Yvonne Ace-Wagoner; Trustee Tammy Menzie; Trustee William Forsyth; Trustee Jennifer Van Valkenburg, and Trustee Amy Phillips.*

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION APPRECIATION**

**October 27-31 is Board of Education Appreciation Week.**

*Thank you to our Board of Education members who volunteer countless hours to the District's students. If you have an opportunity, please share your appreciation for the job they do.*



## A LearnPad for

Each and every Byron-Bergen student—from kindergartner to high school senior—just received a powerful new tool for education: the LearnPad. The specialized tablet computers give teachers a way to deliver more engaging, media-rich, interactive lessons—drawing from a world of content without the limits of traditional text books—while still carefully controlling and guiding the learning experience.

Our District thanks the generous and forward-thinking folks at Liberty Pumps who saw a need in this community and stepped up to open new worlds of education to our children. They have made an impact that will be felt across generations.



*Superintendent Casey Kosiorek and the Board of Education members thank Liberty Pumps' Charlie Cook and Jeff Cook for their amazing gift.*



*Look around our schools and you will see that students and teachers are already hard at work exploring new ways to put their LearnPads to use.*





# every student



Liberty Pumps Byron-Bergen Schools September 25, 2014

Dear Friends at Liberty Pumps,  
 Thank you for our Learnpads!  
 We have done so much learning and we want to learn more! Our Learnpads are the best tools ever! They really help us exercise our brains. We use our Learnpads every day.

So far some of our favorite tools to use are Xtramath which helps us to be fast at math facts. We also love to practice our math using Math Slicer and Math Blaster. We have studied Fairy Tales and Tall Tales. The Learnpads let us find and pick more of these genres to read. We can also watch special video clips that can teach us about sounds. That helps us to become better readers.

You have helped to make a BIG difference at Byron-Bergen!  
 Your Friends,  
 Mrs. Ezard's Brain Athletes

Ruger Chris Jack Grace  
 Adara Olivia Jaros Noah  
 Ashley Connor IZZY  
 Roman Jake Evi Hoke Samantha

Mrs. Ezard

Dear Liberty Pumps,  
 Thank-you for the LearnPads. We like drawing and writing our sight words. It will be fun to play games.  
 Thank-you!  
 Love,  
 Mrs. Feissner's Class  
 Mrs. Chamberlain's Class  
 Mrs. Simmons' Class  
 Ms. Amidon's Class  
 It's all good in Kindergarten!





# BYRON-BERGEN WELCOMES NEW STAFF

*We are happy to introduce our many new teaching and support staff members who have joined us for the 2014–2015 school year.*

**ELIZABETH AMIDON** left three years of teaching pre-K in Charlotte, North Carolina to join B-B as a kindergarten teacher. “Everyone here is so welcoming,” she says. “I feel like I am a part of a family and that everyone is truly working together for the good of the school and the kids.” Originally from Pembroke, Amidon went to The College at Brockport for undergraduate work and received her master’s degree in Early Childhood and Special Education from Nazareth College.

She is very close with her two sisters (in Fort Myers, Florida and in Charlotte, North Carolina) and her parents who still live in Pembroke. Amidon loves running, skiing, kayaking, “anything outdoors!” And she certainly came to the right place—“My favorite sports team is the Buffalo Bills.”

**TARA BLOWERS**, our new sixth-grade teacher, feels right at home in our tight-knit community. “It reminds me a lot of Alexander, New York, where I grew up. And B-B Elementary School is inviting and very student-focused.” Blowers holds a master’s degree in Literacy from SUNY Geneseo, where she also did her undergraduate work in childhood/special education. She taught second and sixth grades last year in Alexander and Attica.

She is having fun getting to know the kids in her class—“I love their sense of humor and questioning minds.” Both she and her husband, Brennan, are musicians. They travel to lead worship at different conferences around western New York. She is the assistant worship leader at Northgate Free Methodist Church in Batavia.

**ANDREA FEENEY**, our new school counselor for the 6:1:1 program, just loves the B-B bee logo. “I want it on everything!” she says. She is a big fan of her kids, too: “My students bring high energy, big dreams, and great personalities into my room every day,” she says.

Feeney comes to us from Rush-Henrietta Alternative High School. Her bachelor’s degree is from The College at Brockport in Health Science with a concentration in alcohol and substance abuse counseling; she also has a master’s in School Counseling (U of R) and CAS (Roberts Wesleyan College). She enjoys cooking and yoga; she and husband John have a 4-year-old son, Liam, and two dogs.

**LYNNETTE GALL** has a thoroughly rural background—growing up in Scottsville and around her family’s dairy farm in Caledonia; riding horses since she was 10—and loves that so many of our kids share that experience. Currently teaching third grade at B-B, Gall has a bachelor’s in Art History from SUNY Geneseo and a master’s in Childhood and Special Education from Roberts Wesleyan College.

“I absolutely love the small tight-knit community here!” she says. “If you pass someone on the sidewalk going to Ralph and Rosie’s for some pizza, you receive a smile and a hello.” She says the kids are all unique and bring lots of different ideas to class. “I absolutely love when they point out new and interesting words to add to our word wall.” Gall’s large extended family includes a brother, Craig, a new nephew, Aaron Daniel, and her cat, Maverick.

**MARIAH LASPINA** says she can’t pick one thing she likes about the kids in her class—there are just too many things she likes: their enthusiasm, compassion, and positive attitudes to name a few. LaSpina is our newest .4 physical education teacher. She has a bachelor’s degree and teaching certification in physical education from The College at Brockport.

“The B-B community is friendly, welcoming, and deeply involved in school functions; everyone is willing to lend a helping hand to make B-B a better place,” she says. “That’s why it’s such a great place to be. GO BEES!” LaSpina is a Rochester native. She has two dogs, Dooley and Koko, and enjoys coaching and family time with her parents and older brother Nick. “I have many outside interests,” she says, “but teaching is my true passion.”

**KELLY MORRISS**, our newest fifth-grade long-term substitute teacher, grew up in Spencerport, did her undergraduate work at St. John Fisher, and attained graduate degrees in Literacy and Special Education 1-6 at Roberts Wesleyan College. She comes to us from Brockport where she taught third grade.

What does she like best about B-B students? “EVERYTHING!” she says. “They are awesome kids and I truly enjoy coming in everyday to teach them!” Morriss loves figure skating, reading, traveling, baking and cooking. She is close with her family (especially her younger sister), and lives with an attention-demanding cat named Oscar. She is enjoying being part of the B-B community, both inside and outside of school. She says, “Everyone is incredibly respectful of each other.”



**ALYSON TARDY** once walked the halls of B-B as a student. Now she has come home as our sixth-grade long-term substitute teacher. Tardy is a graduate of The College at Brockport, with a major in Interdisciplinary Arts for Children, minor in music, and certifications in Childhood Education and Students with Disabilities. She is working on her master's in Literacy B-12.

"Many inspirational B-B teachers helped foster my passion for the performing arts, literacy, and education. I enjoy integrating drama and creative arts in my lessons, and seeing my own students' enthusiasm and eagerness to learn." Tardy is an active community volunteer: you may have seen her directing the Gillam-Grant Jr. Drama Club; coordinating the annual Bergen Park Festival Bergen Idol Competition; or performing in musical theater. She lives in Bergen with husband Dan and children Miriam and Joshua—both future B-B graduates like their mom.

**AMBER TAYLOR-BURNS** says the students in her second-grade class are kind, caring, helpful, intelligent, hard-working, and "(sometimes) silly" young people. "I look forward to seeing their smiling faces as they enter the classroom each day!"

Taylor-Burns has a bachelor's degree from SUNY Geneseo in Childhood Education and Students with Disabilities (Grades 1-6) (along with certifications in both areas); and a master's in Education from The College at Brockport. She and her husband, Don, live in Scottsville with a cat and a new puppy. She is a Deacon and choir member at Bethany Presbyterian Church and plays the flute. She is happy to be part of the Elementary School team. She says, "Although I am new to the District, the B-B community has made me feel right at home."

**FRAN TOPOREK** joins us as the Jr./Sr. High and Elementary Schools' Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) teacher. She earned her bachelor's degree in FACS from Buffalo State College, a master's in elementary education from Nazareth College, and has taught in several nearby districts.

She says, "I most like the sincere friendliness and caring of the staff and administration at B-B! I love the country setting and fresh air." Toporek says one other thing really stands out. "The politeness of my students has impressed me." She is the co-booster Mom for her daughter, Allyse's high school swim team and will be celebrating a 25-year wedding anniversary this fall.

**TERRY VICK'S** dual certification in Science and Special Education, along with past teaching experience here at B-B (from 2005-10) make him a welcome addition to our Jr./Sr. High staff. Vick is glad to be back—"The thing I like most about B-B is the communal spirit that exists in a close-knit district like this," he says. "I like the comradery that exists with faculty, administration, and staff."

He looks forward to getting to know students on an individual basis. "They are all eager to learn and curious about science, which makes it easy to engage and challenge them." Terry and his wife Carla enjoy traveling, kayaking, gardening, hiking, biking, and camping. They have two children, Connor and Tristan, and an English springer spaniel.

**MORGAN WAGNER** is a local girl through and through: a resident of Basom, New York, with bachelor's and master's degrees from Roberts Wesleyan College and Canisius College, and experience as a recreation supervisor in Medina and substitute teacher and varsity volleyball coach in Pembroke. She'll be a long-term substitute here for elementary physical education.

"B-B is the most friendly and welcoming environment to work in," Wagner says. "I love how the community supports this school—like the LearnPads from Liberty Pumps—they do amazing things for students." Her own students are in for a treat—"Kids in my class always have fun. They are as energetic and excited about physical activity as I am!" Wagner and husband Craig were married this year on the Fourth of July and live happily with their cat, Tootsie.

*(continued on p. 8)*



Front (l-r): Alyson Tardy, Kelly Morriss, Elizabeth (Beth) Amidon, Lynnette Gall, Mariah LaSpina, and Frances Toporek. Back (l-r): Andrea Feeney, Amber Taylor-Burns, Terry Vick, Morgan Wagner, and Tara Blowers.



(continued from p. 7)

## BYRON-BERGEN WELCOMES NEW STAFF



*Bus Aide  
Donna Peet*



*Custodian  
Charlene Williams*



*Cleaner  
Ronald Krygier*

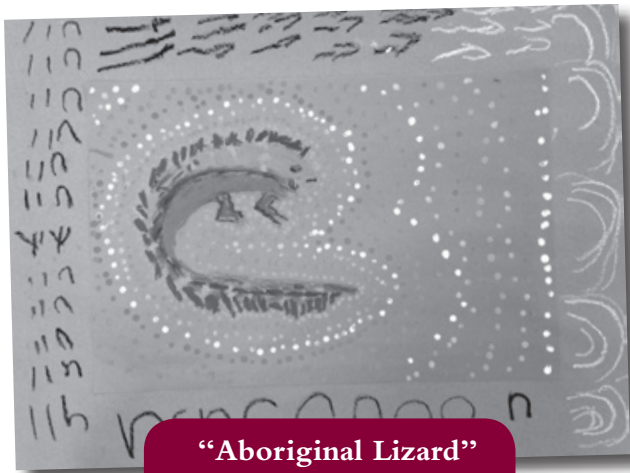


*Cleaner  
Edward McMahon*



*Cleaner  
Joellen Nichols*

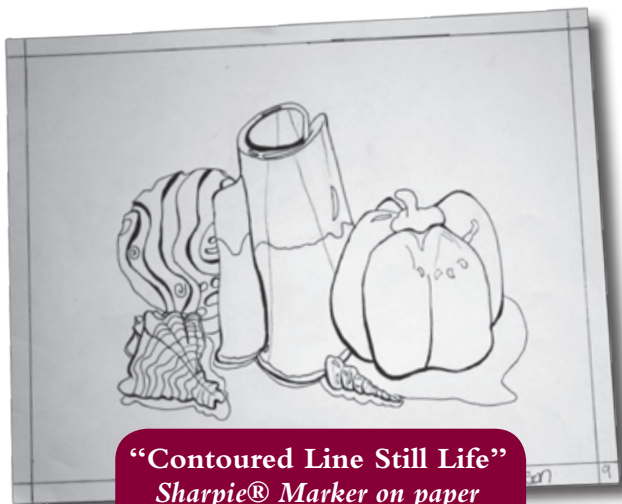
## STUDENT SHOWCASE



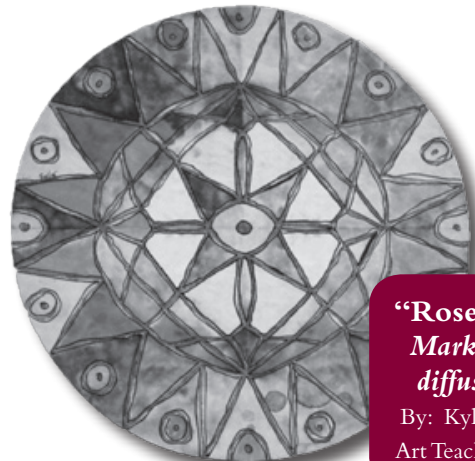
**“Aboriginal Lizard”**  
*Mixed media on paper*  
By: Rayden Robinson, gr. 2  
Art Teacher: Mrs. Coniglio



**“Help Bots”**  
*Clay and tempera paint*  
By: Students in gr. 3-4  
Art Teacher: Mrs. Coniglio



**“Contoured Line Still Life”**  
*Sharpie® Marker on paper*  
By: Jeanne Denson, gr. 9  
Art Teacher: Mrs. Fritz



**“Rose Window”**  
*Marker on color  
diffusing paper*  
By: Kyle Foeller, gr. 7  
Art Teacher: Mrs. Auer





## Two Named to Byron-Bergen Alumni Hall of Fame

Byron-Bergen Central Schools has named two alumni to the Alumni Hall of Fame for 2014. Elizabeth Findlay (class of 1980) and David Keller (class of 1975) join the ranks of other distinguished Byron-Bergen alumni honored for their achievements after graduation.

The Byron-Bergen Alumni Hall of Fame provides the young people of our district with positive adult role models and shows that graduates of Byron-Bergen can achieve high levels of accomplishment in their lives. This honor has been given to alumni for 12 years and has become part of our school district culture. It is a permanent reminder to our students about the outcome of hard work and diligence. This year's honorees exemplify dedication, leadership, and service.



While attending Byron-Bergen CSD, **Elizabeth Findlay** participated in National Honor Society, Band, Chorale, Solo Festival, and All County Band. She earned a bachelor's degree from SUNY Fredonia in elementary education, and a master's degree in reading from SUNY Brockport. Findlay started teaching at

Byron-Bergen in 1985 and taught kindergarten for her first five years, becoming a sixth-grade teacher in 1990. She continues in that role today. She has been very active in Byron-Bergen schools, participating on many committees, mentoring new teachers, and is a Master Teacher for student teachers. Findlay participated in the Bureau of Education and Research in Rochester "using guided reading to help students become better readers." In the 2005-06 school year, she was selected as the Byron-Bergen Middle School Teacher of the Year. In 2008, she was chosen as the Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year. Findlay has served on the Gillam-Grant Board of Directors and is a member of the St. James Episcopal Church. She is a compassionate role model and a constant source of encouragement and inspiration to the youth of the Byron-Bergen community.



**David Keller** was active in French Club, Future Teachers of America, American Field Service, Yearbook Co-Editor, Swim Club, Concert Band, Marching Band, and hosted an exchange student from Brazil during his time at Byron-Bergen. In 1975, he joined the U.S. Army Bands Program and studied music under the Navy

Master Chief Mike Scairini. Upon graduation from the School of Music, Keller served in multiple army bands throughout the United States and in Berlin, Germany. In 1992, he was selected to the prestigious U.S. Army Field Band (the musical ambassadors of the Army) in Washington, D.C. The culmination of his military career came when he was selected as the first musician to become a Command Sergeant Major. Sergeant Major Keller (retired) served our nation for over 34 years and while in the U.S. Army Field Band, performed in all 50 states. He performed for every Presidential Inaugural event from George Bush, Sr. through Barack Obama. During his military career, Keller received numerous awards and medals. He has performed with many symphonies and orchestras throughout the United States. Mr. Keller pursued his education at numerous universities and colleges, ultimately studying music with Karl Nitchie, principle bassoonist with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. Keller is a member of St. Luke's Episcopal Church. He is currently the principle bassoonist with Genesee Symphony; bassoonist/clarinetist, Batavia Concert Band; pit musician for Genesee Community College, Batavia Players, and Byron-Bergen CSD. Keller participates in the Byron-Bergen holiday and spring concerts (2011-present), performs in the pit orchestra for musicals, and has assisted with construction/painting of the school musical sets. He is the treasurer of the B-B Music Boosters, and has been instrumental in fundraising events for the group; and is an active member of Gillam-Grant. Mr. Keller enjoys gardening, renovating his 179-year-old house in South Byron, taking cruises, and being helpful to others. His loyalty to his community/country, passion for music, and tireless volunteerism make him an outstanding role model for our youth.

## SUBSTITUTES NEEDED

"Do you have an interest in helping our school in the capacity of Substitute Teacher and/or Substitute Teacher Aide?"

If so, please visit our website [www.bbschools.org](http://www.bbschools.org) and download an application. For more information, call Sally Mech at 494-1220 ext. 2201.





## JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL UPDATE

This fall every student in the Jr./Sr. High School received their new 1-1 technology device, the LearnPad. Thank you to Liberty Pumps for the generous donation that made this possible. The LearnPad places a 21st-century instructional resource at each of our students' fingertips. Faculty has begun integrating the LearnPads into their daily lessons to directly connect students with engaging videos, supplemental texts, and supportive educational apps. Tools like the LearnPad help students hone their skills as professional consumers of technology—skills that will be fundamental elements for their success as they advance down their future college and career pathways.

Congratulations to all of our sports teams for a great fall season. Our student athletes continue to represent our community with the utmost pride for the uniforms they wear and the people they represent. Each day I am honored to be associated with young adults who conduct themselves with the highest standards of character and class. Best of luck to all teams as they close out their seasons.

As the Principal of the Byron-Bergen Jr./Sr. High School, I am currently completing my decision-making analysis dissertation as part of my work as a doctoral candidate at the University of Rochester. I would like to invite you to participate in a discussion on how students at the Byron-Bergen Jr./Sr. High School can develop a clear vision for a college/career pathway prior to graduation.

As part of my research, I am organizing and conducting focus group discussions to collect information from various

stakeholder groups. The focus group discussions will last for approximately 45 minutes and will be conducted at the Jr./Sr. High School. Please understand that the Byron-Bergen Central School District will not be held to making any of the changes suggested. Your participation is entirely voluntary. The focus group is intended to be an open dialogue and there are no correct or incorrect answers. Your opinions and knowledge on this subject would provide important information for my project. Please contact me at (585) 494-1220 ext. 2401, or email me at [ajohnson@bbschools.org](mailto:ajohnson@bbschools.org) if you are interested in participating.



*Taking a moment from their lesson, students in Diana Walther's eighth-grade English class gathered for a picture with Mr. Johnson, Jr./Sr. High School Principal.*

## Commended Student in the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program



*Emily Bowman*

Byron-Bergen Jr./Sr. High School Principal Aaron Johnson announced that senior student Emily Bowman has been named a Commended Student in the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program. A Letter of Commendation from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC), which conducts the program, was presented to Emily.

About 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation are recognized for their exceptional academic promise. Although they will not continue in the 2015 competition for National Merit Scholarship awards,

Commended Students placed among the top 5 percent of more than 1.5 million students who entered the 2015 competition by taking the 2013 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT).

“The young men and women being named Commended Students have demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success,” commented a spokesperson for NMSC. “These students represent a valuable national resource; recognizing their accomplishments, as well as the key role their schools play in their academic development, is vital to the advancement of educational excellence in our nation. We hope that this recognition will help broaden their educational opportunities and encourage them as they continue their pursuit of academic success.”



## Scholar Program

*The Scholar Program Committee is pleased to announce the names of our current card holders:*

The Byron-Bergen High School's academic incentive program recognizes students for their good effort, attendance, and academics. This reward program is named the "Scholar Program" and the cards achieved are Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Special Recognition. At the end of each year, monetary awards are presented at Academic Awards Night to seniors who have maintained a solid record of attaining cards throughout their high school career.

**GOLD SCHOLAR**  
 Merrisa Bohn  
 Kolbi Brew  
 Brandon Burke  
 Lauren Burke  
 Dante Bzduch  
 Lydia Campbell  
 Colleen Clay  
 Sarah Clay  
 Adam Drake  
 Bethany Ezard  
 Makayla Fee  
 Danielle Foeller  
 Clare Fraser

Morgan Fuller  
 Emma Goodman  
 Kaitlyn Harder  
 Tyler Henry  
 Annaliese Hersom  
 Hayley Hoehn  
 Hailey Hubbard  
 Rebekah Ireland  
 Cora Ivison  
 William Johnson  
 Michaela Kenward  
 Hunter Leach  
 Taylor McPherson  
 Celia Mercovich  
 Gerald Menzie

Rayelle Merrell  
 Ashley Montgomery  
 Sabastian Pawlukewicz  
 Grace Pulcini  
 Brittany Rada  
 Jacob Rada  
 Alexandria Rosse  
 Colby Savage  
 Brianna Shade  
 Katelyn Simmons  
 Emma Smith  
 Dana Van Valkenburg  
 Samantha Walker  
 Adam Walter  
 Michael Zwerka

**SILVER SCHOLAR**  
 Marlaina Fee  
 Chase Felton  
 Rebecca Johnson  
 Brendon Kendall  
 Nathan Knickerbocker

**BRONZE SCHOLAR**  
 Makenzie Muoio

**SPECIAL RECOGNITION**  
 Garrett Sando

## Elementary School News

Byron-Bergen Elementary School is off to a great start in 2014! The first weeks of school hardly felt like fall. With the weather cooperating, we were able to conduct all of our fire drills and bus safety drills comfortably and effectively. The children have had opportunities to get out of the classrooms and engage in outdoor learning. They leave school with big smiles on their faces in anticipation of playing when they get home. I encourage families to make time each night for children to play outside and get some exercise. As they say, "A healthy mind starts with a healthy body."

We are coming off our third-straight year as #1 in Genesee County in *Business First's* Western New York Schools rankings. Many thanks go out to our parents, teachers, students, and community for all of their effort and support. This year we will strive to make it four years in a row by focusing our attention on high-quality instruction in the areas of reading and mathematics. Our teachers spent time over the summer revising and strengthening our English language arts and mathematics curriculum. This ensures that we are fully aligned to the Common Core while maintaining the quality of programming we are proud of here at Byron-Bergen. Of course, nothing has been more exciting than seeing our new LearnPads in action. Thank you to Liberty Pumps for your generous donation.

Our Character Education planning teams have also been busy. "A walk in someone else's shoes" is our theme and is a common thread through the character education programs we teach in the Elementary School. Our Olweus, Leader in Me, and Diversity teams are highlighting this theme



*Selected as "Leader Bees" for demonstrating the Seven Habits of Leadership at the Elementary School are Front (l-r): Mabel Schwartzmeyer, Adara Johnson, Alyssa Hollabaugh, Riley Shallenberger. Back (l-r): Megan Zwerka, Zoe Solis, Kamerie Elliott, Victoria Rogoyski.*

throughout their plans for student learning during the 2014-2015 school year. Students will gain knowledge about empathy and seeking first to understand through songs, art, writing, class meetings, and read-aloud. On October 20, the entire Elementary School will come together to kick-off "A walk in someone else's shoes" in our yearly Character Education assembly.

As always, I am truly grateful to be part of the Byron-Bergen Learning Community. It is going to be a terrific year.



# Video Recorded Instructional Coaching in Action: *The teacher's view from the frontlines*

One of the most promising tools today for any educator who wants to be a better, more effective teacher is Video Recorded Instructional Coaching. This is, according to the Annenberg Institute for School Reform, “a new professional development practice in which teacher leaders serve as coaches to facilitate and guide content-focused professional learning for a school’s teachers.”

Byron-Bergen CSD has taken the lead in developing a program of Video Recorded Instructional Coaching for all District teachers.

B-B’s approach utilizes video recording of lessons along with strategies from Doug Lemov’s work in “Teach like a Champion,” Jim Knight’s “Instructional Coaching,” and John Hollingsworth’s “Explicit Direct Instruction” as true-north guides. Instructional Coach Jim Thompson leads the program and provides expert, confidential, non-evaluative, one-to-one support to participating teachers.

In addition to individual coaching, Thompson offers introductory sessions that show participants what Video Recorded Instructional Coaching looks like through role-playing and model lessons. B-B Superintendent Casey Kosiorek says, “Everyone can get better; this is not just for new teachers, or superstars. No matter where a teacher is, they can improve. We’d like to see every teacher at Byron-Bergen get involved in Video Recorded Instructional Coaching within the next three years.”

### **But How Does It Work?**

We spoke with Elayna Reed, a fifth-grade teacher who has been teaching for almost five years—the last two at Byron-Bergen Elementary School. Reed recently experienced the Video Recorded Instructional Coaching program.



**Why did you decide to get involved with the program?** “When I first heard about it, I was immediately intrigued. I became a teacher because of my passion for lifelong learning. I constantly push myself to be better, and I expect the same from my students. This was an opportunity to walk-the-walk.”

**How did you feel about putting your teaching methods on videotape?** “In college I was required to videotape my lessons. It made sense to take an in-depth look into my effectiveness; however it never occurred to me to continue this practice once I had a classroom of my own. I learned so much in my initial brief meeting with Jim—he really connected and put himself on my level. We were both in it for the same reason: to improve the learning experience for the kids by growing my expertise.”

**How did the feedback process work? Were there any specific improvements you were able to make right away?**

“I loved that only Jim and I ever saw the video. We watched it separately and together and then discussed it. Jim guided me towards thinking about my goals, successes, and ways to further extend my students. We would share experiences and strategies, and discuss what methods could be used to achieve my objectives and become more creative.”

“Jim threw the idea of journaling as a teaching tool out there, and I researched and ran with it. Creating a journal helps students understand concepts by illustrating

them with drawings and real-world demonstrations. It’s been a great addition to my teaching style.”

**What are the long-term results you’ve experienced since you started the program?**

“I used to leave my classroom thinking, ‘I wish I did this differently.’ Now I leave with a heightened awareness of how effective I was. I have a greater sense of fulfillment. This experience has inspired me to be better than I was the day before, not just on good days, but every day. I’ve always been a reflective teacher, but now I reflect at a much higher level.”

**Would you recommend this process to colleagues?**

“This is what 21st-century professional development should look like: interactive, supportive, and reflective. Every teacher should be doing this. Everyone wants more professional development opportunities. But there are very few with such immediate, effective takeaways.”

### **The Joy is in the Journey**

“With teaching, you always aim for those magic moments where everything comes together,” says Thompson. “By Elayna’s second video, her entire lesson was a magic moment. That is what we are working towards achieving for all our teachers.”

“Video Recorded Instructional coaching is about helping teachers build better relationships with individual children by responding to each child’s learning style. It includes knowing and being expert in the content, and having strategies for sharing and explaining the content. Lastly, it looks at formative assessment—do your students really understand?”

“As more teachers benefit from Jim’s coaching and share the experience with their peers, we expect that demand will increase for the program,” says Kosiorek. “We’re also excited to announce that Byron-Bergen is now offering the option of using an Instructional Coaching video session for a portion of a teacher’s locally-negotiated APPR requirement.”



## WNY Tech Academy News

The 2014-15 school year represents the inaugural year for the Western New York Tech Academy. We kicked things off in August with 22 students from nine regional school districts. They spent four days engaging in team building activities on the high ropes course, scouring Godfrey's Pond to build sustainable ecosystems, working in Genesee Community College (GCC) microbiology labs conducting starch and protein tests on various dairy products, conducting sensory evaluations of various flavors of ice cream, and meeting their business mentors for the first time. As the year progresses, students will be completing GCC First Year Experience course, and in doing so, will be working in a project-based environment developing a training program that focuses on healthy group dynamics. We would like to thank Dr. Maureen Leupold from GCC, Godfrey's Pond, Perry's Ice Cream, and our mentors for playing such key roles in making our summer camp successful. We would also like to recognize Liberty Pumps for their incredibly generous donation of the LearnPads. This technology closes the geographical gap for our students and will serve as a critical tool to their long-term success. Our current class, while completing required coursework in their home districts through the year, will also

complete the First Year Experience course. Delivered virtually, this course helps to develop the critical skills of communication and time management. Additionally, while serving as consultant teams, students will be completing a project-based experience that sees them developing a corporate training program focused on effective and healthy group dynamics.

We could not be more proud of the group of students who have chosen to play such a pivotal role in making the WNY Tech Academy a truly unique academic experience in our region.

While we are off and running with our current class of students, we are now recruiting students to fill our second cohort in the 2015-16 school year! If you know of an eighth-grade student who has a general interest in math, science, or technology and is

looking to be academically challenged in non-traditional ways, please have them see their counselor, contact Principal Tom Schulte directly at (585) 494-1220 ext. 2304, or by email [tschulte@wnytechacademy.org](mailto:tschulte@wnytechacademy.org). For more information on the WNY Tech Academy, you may also visit our website at [www.wnytechacademy.org](http://www.wnytechacademy.org) or find us on Facebook [www.Facebook.com/PTECHatBB](http://www.Facebook.com/PTECHatBB).

As John Adams once said, "There are two educations. One should teach us how to make a living and the other how to live." At the WNY Tech Academy we are committed to providing both.



## School Board University

New York State School Board Association's School Board University provides Board members with training to support their need to meet the ever-changing challenges of board governance and fiscal accountability.

School Board University is organized around four curricula strands which address the facets of what an effective school board member should know:

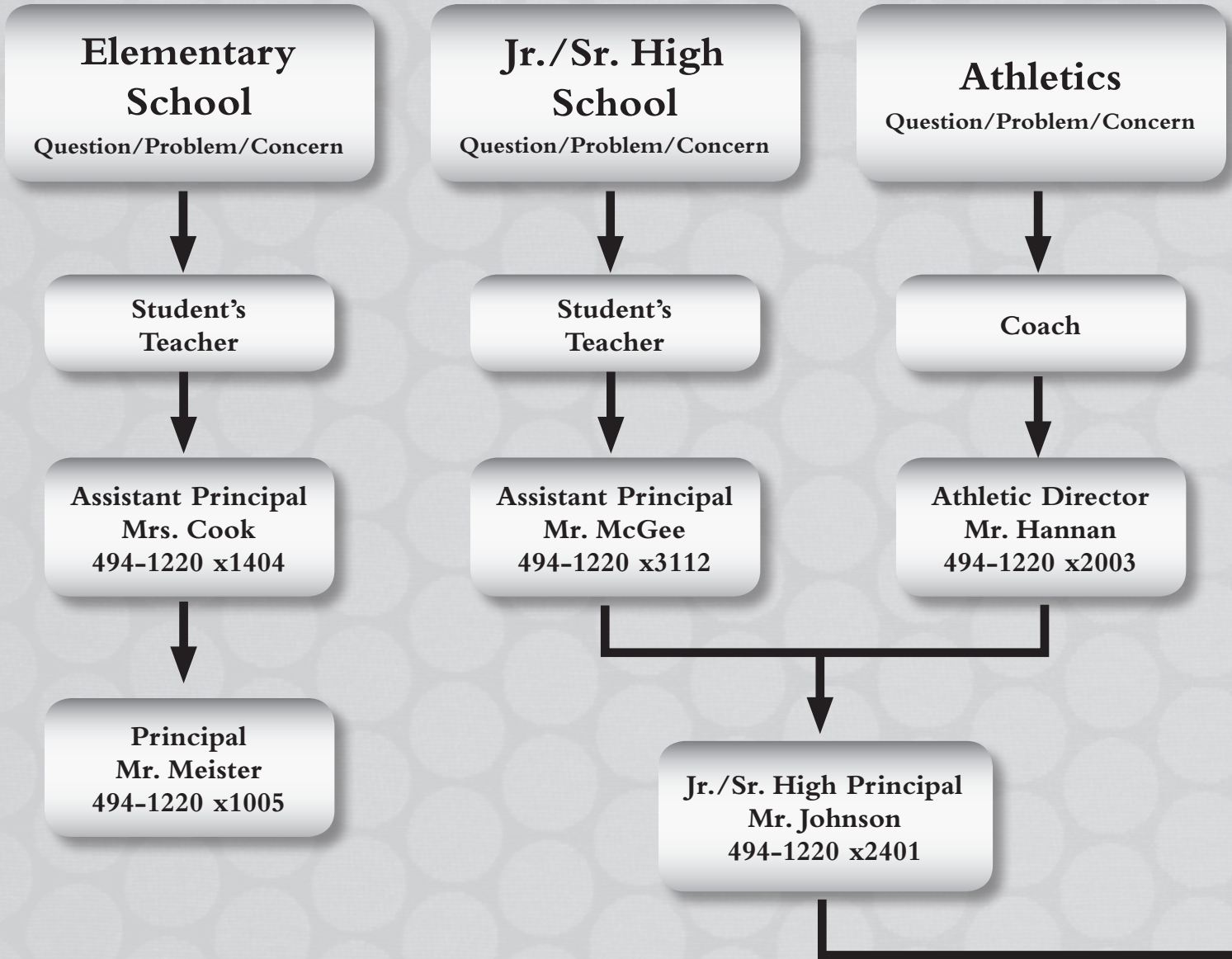
1. Governance and Leadership
2. Fiscal Management
3. Student Achievement
4. District Operations



*Byron-Bergen Board of Education Trustee Amy Phillips is pictured with Superintendent Casey Kosiorek. Mrs. Phillips recently received a certificate recognizing her work with School Board University.*



# FOCAL POINT



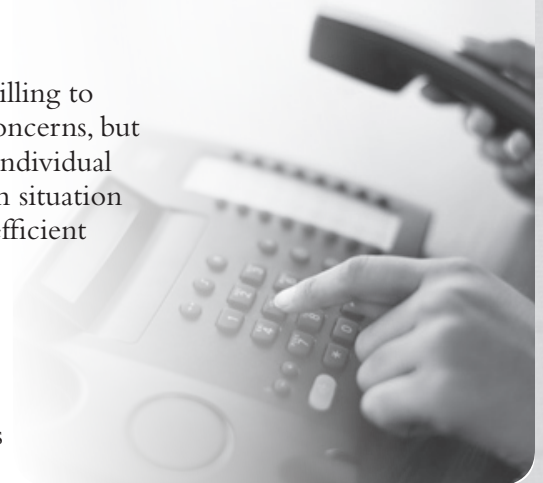
## Dear Byron-Bergen Learning Community,

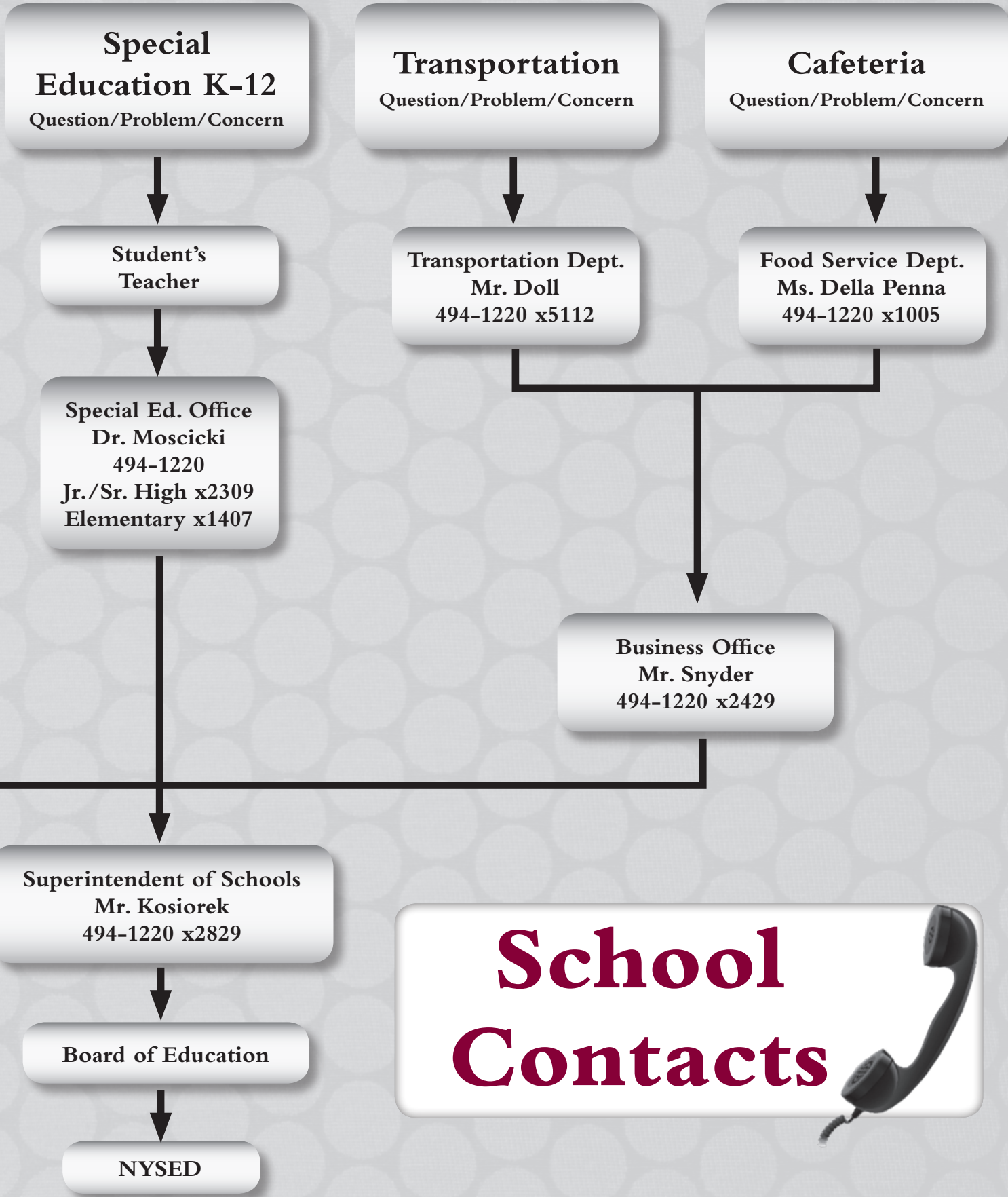
Open communication and customer service is a top priority for the Byron-Bergen School District. Our staff and administration is always interested in hearing any questions or concerns that you might have. Please see the above illustration that will support you in working through your individual situation.

Please know, I'm always willing to hear your questions and concerns, but may refer you to another individual so that we can address each situation in the most effective and efficient manner.

Thank you,

Casey Kosiorek  
Superintendent of Schools





# School Contacts





## SUPERINTENDENT

Casey Kosiorek

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

Debra List, *President*

Daniel Ireland, *Vice President*

Yvonne Ace-Wagoner

William Forsyth

Tammy Menzie

Amy Phillips

Jennifer Van Valkenburg

## EDITOR

Gayla Starowitz

## GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Lisa Mott

[www.bbschools.org](http://www.bbschools.org)

Byron-Bergen Central School District  
Bergen, NY 14416

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Brockport, NY  
Permit No. 7

## New District Safety Procedure

Byron-Bergen CSD began to utilize a new District Safety Procedure in each school and the District Office at the beginning of the 2014-15 school year. Volunteers and visitors are required to present his/her driver's license before being granted permission to enter our buildings. Parents/guardians will not be required to show their license for the drop-off or pick-up of their student(s) unless a situation warrants concern. With our focus on customer service, we will be thoughtful as our guests become accustomed to this new practice. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Casey Kosiorek at (585) 494-1220, ext. 2829.



## ≡ School and Business Summit ≡

Thursday, November 6, 2014 • 7:00 p.m.

### Batavia High School

- ▶ *Businesses need a **skilled workforce** made possible by a quality education!*
- ▶ *A **quality education** requires proper funding from the State!*
- ▶ ***Inadequate funding** has resulted in loss of programs, school closings, and less opportunities for our future workforce!*
- ▶ *Learn from experts in the field about how we can **take action** to help!*

The Genesee Valley  
Chief School Officers'  
Association hosts:

**Rick Timbs**, Exec Director  
Statewide School Finance  
Consortium (SSFC)

**David Little**, Exec Director  
NYS Center for Rural Schools

**Sarah Noble-Moag**, Director,  
Noblehurst Farms Inc.

*Vibrant Communities = Quality Schools + Strong Businesses*