



SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Byron-Bergen Community Members,

The school year is well underway, and the students and staff have hit the ground running! We have many exciting things occurring in the District and I would like to recognize several of our recent accomplishments:

- The Academy of Character Education named Byron-Bergen a New York State School District of Character. We were the only District to receive this accolade.
- *Business First* ranked Byron-Bergen the #1 Elementary School in Genesee County for the fourth year in a row.
- The New York State Education Department has utilized the exemplary work done by Byron-Bergen fourth graders and their instructor in making yogurt the New York State Snack as a standard for instruction. Educators throughout the State will be able to base their own class projects on what was done right here in Byron-Bergen (see the article on page 9.)
- *Business First* ranked Byron-Bergen Jr./Sr. High School second out of 22 districts in our region for athletic success.
- *Business First* ranked Byron-Bergen Jr./Sr. High School 25th out of 97 schools for preparing students for college and career readiness.
- The Genesee Region Athletic League named 106 of our students Scholar Athletes.
- Our athletic teams won nine league championships this past year.
- We have improved our graduation rate to 96 percent.
- Utica National Insurance Group awarded the District the Safety Excellence Award for the 13th year in a row.
- Our music and fine arts programs continue to flourish, with 12 Elementary All-County Band participants, 6 Jr. High All-County Band participants, 8 Sr. High All-County Band participants, 31 All-County Vocal participants (our highest number of participants ever) and 2 Area All-State Vocal participants.

- The Western New York Tech Academy continues to grow and has become a showcase school in the State.

Strategic Plan Update

As we continue to move forward with the implementation of the Strategic Plan, I would like to update you on our progress and on our focus for the year. Since our goal is to sustain these changes, it is important to implement them systematically with the appropriate support. Please join me in recognizing the following accomplishments:

- We have implemented the College and Career Center at the Jr./Sr. High School.
- We have developed the Inquiry-Based Learning class at the Elementary School.
- We have implemented the School Resource Officer position.
- We have implemented the Second Step Drug and Alcohol Prevention Program for students in grades K-6.
- We are providing a student service referral prevention educator at the Jr./Sr. High School.
- We have completed the Building and Conditions Survey for our facilities.
- We have restructured our Buildings and Grounds Department.



Superintendent Casey Kosiorek welcomed students, (l-r) Haylee Gartz, Kyle Smith, and Lauren Gartz, back to school on the first day.



SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE *(continued from front cover)*

Our focus for this year includes:

- Developing a sixth-grade career awareness curriculum.
- Revising the District's fundraising policies and procedures.
- Providing CPR/AED training for staff and all Jr./Sr. High School students.
- Implementing the Reading Recovery Program at the Elementary School.
- Continuing to maintain viable curriculum for grades UPK-12.

Jr./Sr. High School Administration

I congratulate Dr. Aaron Johnson, who has served as our Jr./Sr. High School Principal for the past six years, on his new appointment as Superintendent of Schools for the Avon Central School District. He has been a great leader for our District and I wish him all the best in this new position.

I would also like to recognize and congratulate our new Interim Principal Mr. McGee, who will help us make a smooth transition. Mr. McGee has served as our Assistant Principal/Dean of Students for the past four years and will serve in this position until the end of the school year.

Superintendent Transition!

It was recently announced that I will be leaving Byron-Bergen to become the next Superintendent of the Hilton Central School District. This will take place on January 1, 2016. The District plans to hire an interim for the remainder of the year with the goal of finding a permanent replacement by July 1, 2016. It has been an honor and privilege to be part of this learning community for the past four years. You have been so kind and welcoming to our family. As a District, we have been able to accomplish some amazing things for our students while dealing with the recession and the changing landscape of public education.

I want to thank Ernie Haywood, Debi List, Dan Ireland, Jeff Lathan, Paul Thompson, Dana Keaton, and Eric Toal who served on the Board of Education that hired me. I would also like to recognize the current members of the Board that include Amy Phillips, Yvonne Ace-Wagoner, Bill Forsyth, Tammy Menzie, Jenn VanValkenburg, Dan Ireland, and Debi List. Working with dedicated volunteers who clearly love this District has been a great experience. Thank you to the administrative team, teachers, and support staff who work hard each and every day on behalf of our students. Lastly, I want to thank the parents, students, and greater community members for the opportunity to engage with you as we educate our future. Our family wishes everyone the best and we will always have a special place in our heart for Byron-Bergen.

Our staff and administration are always ready to answer any questions or concerns you might have. Please feel free to contact me at 494-1220, ext. 2829, or ckosiorek@bbschools.org.

Board of Education Appreciation



October 26-30 was Board of Education Appreciation Week. Thank you to our Board of Education members: Front (l-r) Amy Phillips, Debi List, and Yvonne Ace-Wagoner; Back (l-r) Bill Forsyth, Tammy Menzie, Dan Ireland, and Jenn VanValkenburg. They all volunteer countless hours to the District's students. If you have an opportunity, please share your appreciation for the job they do.



Board President's Corner

I'm not sure where the summer went, but would like to take this opportunity to welcome all of our families back to another school year. For those of you who are new transplants to Byron-Bergen, I hope you are happy that you chose to move to this wonderful community. If you are a parent, and put your child on the school bus for the very first time in September, I hope it was with smiles along with the tears. I also know that if your child is on track to graduate next spring, this year will fly by for you.

The start of school has been very exciting, especially with so many new faces. We have more than 20 new faculty and staff members and we are happy to have them here at Byron-Bergen.

The Board of Education would like to congratulate Dr. Johnson on becoming the new superintendent at the Avon School District. He has been a great leader and has done wonderful things for our District, and I know he will do the same for Avon. We are sorry to see him go, but wish him well as one of our educational neighbors.

The Western New York Tech Academy has a beautiful new sign that has just been placed outside the entrance to their building on our campus. This program which concentrates on science, technology, engineering, and math, continues to be a great option for kids, so if you don't know about it or think your child might be interested, please call the school and ask to speak with Mr. Tom Schulte.

There was recently a celebration commemorating the 30-year anniversary of our soccer stadium. We honored the group of founding community members who had a vision of creating a lighted field for our student athletes and then made it into a reality. It was wonderful to acknowledge all the hard work and perseverance shown by these visionaries and by others in our community. This stadium continues to make memories for our students all these years later.

Good luck to all of our fall sports teams as they wrapped up their regular seasons and moved into Sectional play. Thank you and good luck to all the seniors who have been recognized for their contributions to our teams and school. With fall ending soon, we are looking forward to our holiday music programs and all the beautiful sounds from our chorus and band members. Please put the concert dates on your calendar and plan to attend—you will be so glad you did.

As I wrap up, I would like to thank our community for all the support that you continue to provide to our students and school. Your support makes us successful.

Debra List

Debi List, President
Byron-Bergen Board of Education

B-B school bus drivers, (l-r) Deb Shultz and Carol Gonyea, introduce themselves to parents at the Elementary School's Open House on October 15.

Transportation Department Highlights

Drew Doll, B-B Transportation Coordinator

It is very easy for me as the Transportation Coordinator to write about the sincere dedication shown by our entire department in dealing with all that they do. Drivers, bus aides, office staff, and mechanics work very closely together to make safe transportation happen for our students every day.

We are always exceeding the training and guidelines that our State requires of us, and for the last six school years, we have been accident-free. Very few schools can make this claim. New York State strives to make safety our priority, putting forth guidelines like eliminating as many student crossings as possible, and eliminating (or greatly reducing) multiple drop-offs per student.

This year, we have taken on the role of providing drivers and oversight for Elba CSD's Transportation Department. Eight drivers were added to provide service for nearly 500 Elba students every day. We also are providing service and repair for Elba's bus fleet of 15 vehicles. The greatest partnership we have developed is the District's shared sports programs with Elba and LeRoy. Nearly every day, we provide transportation between schools for over six sports teams, so many more students can participate in a sport.

None of our good work and success would be possible without the incredible dedication to detail and safety shown by over 40 professionals in our department. I'm proud to lead such an outstanding group.





BYRON-BERGEN WELCOMES NEW STAFF

We're proud to introduce these talented additions to our teaching and support staff who are joining us in full-time roles for the 2015-16 school year.

At the Elementary School:

AMY-CATHERINE CUNNINGHAM,



our new ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) teacher, loves having students who add diversity to her classes. "It's

like I get to travel without leaving the classroom," she said. She currently teaches at the Elementary School, but may also teach at the High School if there is a need. She has taught ESOL in both Dansville and Keshequa school districts, and prior to that she taught in Elba and in California. Originally from Warsaw, NY, Cunningham has a Bachelor's degree in theater arts and a Master's degree in TESOL (Teaching ESOL).

"I already feel very welcomed by everyone," she said. "I can tell that teachers who work in the Elementary School really do become like family. I'm excited to feel like I'm part of a school." Cunningham is "passionate about performing in musicals and plays," loves to play softball and hopes to travel all over the world. She is married and enjoys time with family and her nieces and nephews.



LISA HALLER says the third- and fourth-graders she works with in Special Education ELA, reading and math classes "are wonderful.

They value education and are eager to learn. Each student has a unique personality that positively influences

the classroom and creates a safe and positive learning environment."

Haller's experience includes teaching kindergarteners with autism in Alexander, NY (where she currently resides) and fifth grade in Batavia. She majored in English literature and childhood education and is finishing her Master's degree in literacy at The College at Brockport. She is married and has three children and two dogs; her youngest son, Christian, attends B-B Elementary. "I enjoy working with the positive staff at B-B," she said. "They are very student-centered and genuinely care about each student. I also have felt great support from parents and community members who are deeply invested in our school."



KELLY MORRISS joined us last year as a long-term substitute teacher and is now part of our fourth-

grade team. "I am excited to stay with Byron-Bergen! It's a great community and I wouldn't want to be anywhere else. I am really happy about teaching fourth grade and I know this year will be great. I have been able to get to know my kiddos and am so excited to work with them again this year."

Morriss did her undergraduate work at St. John Fisher, and attained graduate degrees in Literacy and Special Education 1-6 at Roberts Wesleyan College. She loves figure skating, reading, traveling, baking and cooking. She is part of a close-knit family which includes her cat, Oscar.



JENNA PIAZZA just moved back to the area this past July from seven years of teaching in New York City. She

is leading a fourth-grade classroom at the Elementary School. Piazza is originally from Batavia, and holds dual certification for grades 1-6 from SUNY Geneseo, with a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Buffalo State College. She loves reading and going for runs with her 3-year-old rescue lab, Stella.

"What I love most about B-B is the sense of community," she said. "I have met the friendliest and most welcoming people, including my colleagues, other staff members, and parents. My students have great personalities and all have a sense of humor. They all work very hard and are invested in their learning. This mix makes our classroom a fun place to learn!"



ALYSON TARDY came home to Byron-Bergen last year as a long-term substitute; now she's here to stay as a fourth-

grade teacher. A graduate of B-B schools and The College at Brockport, Tardy has a degree in Interdisciplinary Arts for Children and certifications in Childhood Education and Students with Disabilities. She will complete her Master's degree in Literacy B-12 this spring.

Tardy lives in Bergen with her husband and two children, Miriam and Joshua, and directs the Gillam-Grant Jr. Drama Club and the annual



Bergen Park Festival Bergen Idol Competition. “I am so thankful for the opportunity to teach at B-B,” she said. “I’m particularly looking forward to diving into the fourth-grade social studies curriculum and integrating creative arts into my lessons.”



BRENDA HALE has quickly discovered the perks of being our Elementary School Nurse. “What I like most is that the

kids who come into my office are all so grateful. I get a lot of ‘Thank You’s.’ The best is when they are leaving and I say, ‘Have a nice morning’ and they respond with ‘You, too!’ Each student is different and each one has a unique personality that just melts my heart.”

Hale was born and raised in LeRoy, where she currently lives. She is a registered nurse who received her Associate’s degree in nursing from Genesee Community College and is working on her Bachelor’s degree at The College at Brockport. Before coming to B-B, she worked at Unity Hospital as an orthopedic nurse, and continues to work part-time at an urgent care facility. She has a large extended family in LeRoy, two children, MaKenna and Kyle, a Boston Terrier named Lily, and two cats. Hale says that the entire B-B community—staff, students, and parents—has been “wonderful and welcoming.”



COLLEEN CLARY will be teaching fifth-grade reading and science, along with anti-bullying this year as a long-term substitute.

She grew up in Kendall and being from a small town, always wanted to work in a smaller district. “I just feel at home. I like the fact that we are making an impact on these kids’ lives. Growing up with the same people

really bonds you and I enjoy watching the friendships the kids share. The staff is tight-knit and you can see the reflection of the community within the school.”

Clary attended SUNY Fredonia for both undergraduate and graduate degrees. She has been a substitute teacher for several local districts, including Spencerport last year. She and her partner, Cole, and his daughter Abigail, are restoring an old farmhouse in Kendall and looking for the perfect rescue dog to join their family.

She says her students have been “extremely friendly, welcoming, and curious. They make me laugh easily.” She is impressed by how caring and considerate they are of each other. “I love just talking and listening to all the ideas they are excited to share with me.”



JANET GOODENBERY has joined us this year as a long-term substitute Family and Consumer Science (FACS)

teacher. She is an alumnus of Genesee Community College, Buffalo State College, and Ashford University, and has taught FACS in Medina, Buffalo, and York Central schools. She lives in rural Oakfield, NY, close to her sisters and her mom, and enjoys gardening, baking and quilting. Family is important—Goodenbery has brothers in Tennessee and Florida, along with four “amazing” sons and eight grandchildren.

“I really enjoy the friendliness and relaxed atmosphere here at Byron-Bergen,” she said. “My colleagues and the students here are always willing to point me in the right direction or help me with copy machine jams. They have made me feel welcome. My favorite thing about all the students here is how quick they are to return my smile and greeting when I say ‘good morning’ to them.”

At the Jr./Sr. High School:



JENNIFER BACK is excited to be our newest Global I and II Social Studies teacher at the Sr. High School. She comes to us from

East Ridge HS in Irondequoit. Back did undergraduate work in history and social studies education at Syracuse University and has a Master’s degree in social studies education grades 5-12 from the University of Rochester. Her family lives in Buffalo, but her sister plays field hockey for Nazareth College. Out of school, Back is a CrossFit trainer and coaches JV field hockey at East Ridge.

She has been impressed with how hard-working and respectful her students are. “I enjoy how tight-knit and supportive the B-B community is—both with education and celebrating success where it is earned,” she said. “Everyone has been so welcoming and supportive.”



ROB KAERCHER, as our new College and Career Counselor, looks forward to helping students explore many different

pathways to find their full potential. “I love it when students are curious,” he said. “I like giving them options and guiding them to step out of their comfort zone.” Kaercher has been a college admissions counselor, and most recently a high school guidance counselor in Latham, NY. He grew up around Albany, but his wife Kaitlin, a third-grade teacher, is a native of Holley. They have a daughter, Charlotte. Kaercher has a Bachelor’s degree in communications from

continued on page 6



Elementary School News

By Brian Meister,
Elementary School Principal

Byron-Bergen Elementary School is off to a terrific start for the 2015-16 school year. In the days leading up to school, our teachers were busy preparing lessons and setting up classrooms. The children love to see their names written with care on desks, lockers, and cubbies.

This year's Curriculum Night was moved to the week immediately preceding the start of school. This change was in response to feedback we received suggesting that parents would like the opportunity to meet teachers early on and drop off materials and supplies. Additionally, we spread the grade levels over multiple nights so that families could attend the sessions for all of their children. We were thrilled with the turnout and the opportunity to forge partnerships with parents. This change also provided the chance for an old tradition to return. On October 15, the Elementary School opened its doors to students and their families for a fun-filled good old-fashioned Open House. Having been in school for a month, the children were excited to show their parents around the school, introduce them to their teachers, and show off some of the work they have done. It was a great evening.

Here at the Elementary School, we recognize that the development of good character leads to a safe and bully-free



Students Rayden Robinson and Janessa Amesbury, pictured with Mr. Meister who is dressed in fire turnout gear. Volunteers from the Bergen, Byron, and South Byron Fire Companies and Rescue Squads participated in the annual Fire Prevention Day at the Elementary School on October 7.

environment. Our character education team will be working throughout the year to help students develop positive leadership qualities and report instances of bullying. We are working proactively to reduce bullying within our school by teaching the Seven Habits of Leadership found in The Leader In Me program, and following the Olweus Bully Prevention Rules. These programs teach students the power of being leaders within our school and community and the impact they can have as bystanders. Each week, we will be showing our Byron-Bergen pride by wearing special t-shirts in support of our school being bully-free. Every child in the Elementary School will be given a school spirit t-shirt that reads "Byron-Bergen Elementary School—Creating Leaders One Student at a Time." These shirts were made possible thanks to the collection of Box

Tops for Education. Please continue to collect these and send them in with your child. They are a terrific way to support our children.

As your Principal, I would like to thank the Byron-Bergen School community for all of your support. It is my distinct honor to partner with you to provide the children of Byron-Bergen with the finest school experience. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at bmeister@bbschools.org or 494-1220.

BYRON-BERGEN WELCOMES NEW STAFF *(continued from page 5)*

Manhattan College, and a Master's in school counseling from CUNY Brooklyn College.

"I connected instantly with the real sense of community and pride shared by everyone inside and outside of this school," he said. "Everyone is genuinely happy to help and do what it takes to contribute to the success of the students. This is one of the warmest welcomes I have ever received." As a sports fan, Kaercher will be cheering for the Yankees, the Giants, the Buffalo Sabers, and the Bills — and now the Byron-Bergen Bees.

Finally, we offer a warm Byron-Bergen welcome to these new faces; and our sincere congratulations to some familiar folks who have moved into new roles:

Long-Term Substitute Teachers: **CHRISTIAN CASE**—Math; **CHARITY KINKELAAR**—Kindergarten.

Clerical: **LEORA BROWN**—Sr. High Secretary; **JESSICA O'NEIL**—Jr. High Secretary; **BONNIE KLEIN**—Clerk-Typist for the Transportation and Maintenance Departments.

Maintenance Department: **TOM FAGAN**—Maintenance; **TOM KLYCEK**—Maintenance; **RICK MALONE**—Head Custodial Worker; **JACKIE MCCOMBS**—Cleaner; **KEVIN MCGUIRE**—Maintenance; **TED PIENDEL**—Maintenance.

Teacher Aides: **COREENA GREEN**; **ROBYN GUNTHER**; **PATRICIA MERRITT**.

Bus Aide: **CINDY MUCHKO**.



JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL UPDATE

By Patrick McGee, Interim Principal

It is with great pride and excitement that I write this to you as the new Interim Principal of Byron-Bergen Jr./Sr. High School. This is my ninth year working for the District. During this time, my experiences included teaching fifth grade for five years, coaching multiple modified, junior varsity, and varsity sports, and participating in a variety of school-community partnership groups and events. Most recently, I have served as the Dean of Students and Assistant Principal of the Jr./Sr. High School for more than three years. I have truly seen great changes over this time. I will continue to build on the foundation of high expectations that have been set to propel our students and school community to greater academic and social success.

One of the most important aspects of my work here at the Byron-Bergen Jr./Sr. High School will be continuing to build strong relationships with students, teachers, families, and community members. You will find me visible in the building throughout the school day and after-hours at school and community events. My passion has been and always will be educating students. With that in mind, you can expect that I will work diligently with teachers to make sure our students are exposed to curriculum and instruction that is both engaging and challenging. Our focus will remain on character education initiatives, 21st century skills, fostering a nurturing, safe environment for students, using data to inform instruction, college and career readiness, and providing exciting and challenging learning opportunities for all students.

As mentioned above, an important initiative at the Jr./Sr. High School is college and career readiness. Our new College and Career Counselor, Rob Kaercher, has begun meeting with students across all grade levels, gathering feedback and providing college and career assistance. The students Mr. Kaercher has met with have been actively engaged in their search for postsecondary pathways. Their curiosity and inquisitive nature is allowing them to step out of their comfort zone and learn about the range of opportunities before them.

In sticking with the goal of improving college and career readiness, our students will see many new opportunities this year at the Center. Naviance Family Connection, a comprehensive college and career readiness program, will be introduced to all students in the Jr./Sr. High School. Beginning this month, all seniors will learn about Family Connection in English class, and will receive their usernames and passwords. Each grade will continue to be introduced to Family Connection throughout the remainder of 2015. The program will help alleviate student anxiety by guiding them toward career pathways and solidifying their postsecondary pursuits. Continuing through the school year, the College and



Career Center will welcome admissions representatives and career experts from a variety of industries to speak directly with students.

Congratulations to all of our sports teams for a great fall season. Our student athletes continue to have success on the field and in the classroom. I am very proud to attend our sporting events and witness the camaraderie and school community spirit amongst our teams and fans. Good luck to all of our teams as they close out the season.

I welcome your input and ideas. Please feel free to contact me at 494-1220 ext. 2401, or by email at pmcgee@bbschools.org.

Students learn to recognize unhealthy relationships

Students at the Jr./Sr. High School learned how to recognize unhealthy relationships, thanks to our local YWCA. During the assembly in October,



students took part in skits demonstrating controlling behavior, jealousy, and verbal abuse, and weighed in on what they saw. They also watched a video in which social media and domestic violence was a central topic. Organizers led a Q&A afterwards, encouraging students to recognize which actions were unhealthy and why.



New College and Career Center helps students explore options for their future

Scores of enthusiastic students filled the halls of Byron-Bergen Jr./Sr. High School on October 13 for the school's annual College Day. Hosted by the new College and Career Center, College Day featured the Rochester Area College Consortium and representatives from 12 local colleges and universities who were on hand to share information, answer questions, and provide direction. The college information tables were buzzing with conversation throughout the 45-minute event.

"This is an opportunity for students to see that there is a wide world of options open to them when they leave high school," said College and Career Counselor Robert Kaercher. "These colleges are right in our own backyard. They have excellent two- or four-year programs and a huge variety of majors for every interest."

The College and Career Center provides students with resources, tools, personalized attention, and expert advice to help them find the college or career path that is right for them. In addition to the College Day event, the Center arranges for many out-of-area colleges and universities to visit the campus, especially if students have a particular interest in their programs.

"We are very happy to be able to offer our students and their families a dedicated college and career center focused on preparing them for the next step after graduation," said Jr./Sr. High School Interim Principal Patrick McGee. "Students can use the Center's computers for career or college preparation and selection, applications for scholarships or financial aid, college entrance essay writing, or resume writing for job application. Most importantly, they will have the individualized guidance, counseling, and support they need to be successful."

The Rochester Area College Consortium's 12 participating colleges are: Alfred State, Alfred University, The College at Brockport, Finger Lakes Community College, Genesee Community College, Keuka College, Monroe Community College, Nazareth College, Roberts Wesleyan College, Rochester Institute of Technology, St. John Fisher College, and the University of Rochester.



Representatives from Genesee Community College and St. John Fisher College discuss their academic programs with Byron-Bergen students.

Smart Byron-Bergen students took the opportunity to make connections and network with admission representatives from the schools they are interested in attending.



Scholar Program

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 the year, monetary awards are presented at Academic & Athletic Recognition Night to seniors who have maintained a solid record of attaining cards throughout their high school career. The Scholar Program Committee is pleased to announce the 2014-15 fourth quarter recipients (effective through December 11, 2015):

Gold Scholar

- Caitlin Ashton
- Larissa Ashton
- Lindsey Bowman
- Benjamin Bowman
- Kolbi Brew
- Cameron Brumsted
- Brandon Burke
- Elizabeth Burlingame
- Siomara Caballero
- Lydia Campbell
- Hannah Catalino
- Benjamin Chaback
- Mariah Fee
- Kyle Foeller
- Clare Fraser
- Sara Fraser
- Jared Fregoe
- Kelsey Fuller
- Brittany Goebel
- Emma Goodman
- Chad Green
- Amaya Gunther
- Justin Hannan
- Tyler Henry
- Annaliese Hersom
- Hailey Hubbard
- Cora Ivison
- William Johnson
- Cambria Kinkelaar
- Hunter Leach

- Jillian Menzie
- Celia Mercovich
- Ashley Montgomery
- Erin Parnapy
- Brittany Rada
- Alexandria Rosse
- Auburn Schwartzmeyer
- Chloe Shuskey
- Garrett Swinter
- Dana VanValkenburg
- Annabella Vurraro
- Michael Zwerka
- Nathan Zwerka

Silver Scholar

- Sarah Bleiler
- Elizabeth Donnelly
- Madison Farnsworth
- Marlaina Fee
- Mackenzie Fox
- Morgan Fuller
- Hayley Hoehn
- Melissa MacCowan
- Joelle Meister
- Samantha Wade

Bronze Scholar

- Julia Menzie



WNY Tech Academy News

By Tom Schulte, Principal

As the 2015-16 school year kicks off, exciting things are happening at the Western New York Tech Academy. Since June of last year, we have moved into our new home on campus, welcomed our 10th-grade team back, introduced 27 new ninth-grade members to our organization, delivered a successful weeklong summer camp, and are now running full steam ahead with our curriculum.

With our 10th-grade team on campus daily, we are diving into project-based learning. Team members kicked the year off by developing marketing materials for the Western New York Science Technology Advanced Manufacturing Park (WNY STAMP) site. Students researched the aspects of this 1,250-acre site located in Alabama, NY, that make it attractive to potential high tech manufacturers. Their hard work and learning was validated when members of our team attended an October 7 event, where Governor Cuomo announced that a 160,000 square-foot solar cell manufacturing facility would be built on the STAMP site. Frank van Mierlo, the CEO of that company, 1366 Technologies, outlined the reasons his company specifically chose the

STAMP location—the same reasons our marketers had deduced.

Students are now moving on to research how electrical energy is generated at Niagara Falls, and will further examine alternative power generation solutions as part of their Applied Mathematics course. Our team is also researching topics in semiconductors, optics/telescopes, microscope design, failure engineering, energy efficiency specifically related to pumping systems, genomics, Six Sigma manufacturing, and colonizing Mars as part of their Problem Solving course. Wrapping up our work, personal fitness plans are being developed and implemented in Physical Education, and our members are beginning a course where they will be

strengthening their skillsets in utilizing Microsoft Office.

While it's only October we are also looking ahead to next year. We will be reaching out to the Byron-Bergen eighth-grade class, teachers and counselor in the hopes of finding students interested in applying for membership to this exciting program. If anyone would like to learn more about our program, please contact me directly through email at tschulte@wnytechacademy.org or by phone at (585) 494-1220 x3137.



Students from all over NYS will benefit from our fourth-graders' experience with yogurt and government

A civics lesson at Byron-Bergen Elementary School grew into a passionate, two-year learning project that engaged the entire school, the community, and business and government leaders. It resulted in legislation making yogurt the Official Snack of New York State.

Now the lesson has been added to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) K-12 Social Studies Resource Toolkit. The Toolkit is written by New York State teachers and is part of the NYSED's EngageNY.org initiative that provides educators with real-time, professional learning tools and resources.

“This is a well-deserved honor for our civics teacher Craig Schroth, all his students who worked so hard to shepherd the legislation into law, and for our entire school community who got involved and supported their efforts,” said Superintendent Casey Kosiorek. “We are very proud that what started in our school will be used across New York to help students understand the voice they have in government.” The lesson can be seen at <http://www.c3teachers.org/inquiries/government-and-citizens>.



STAR Exemption

What is STAR?

STAR is a New York State tax relief program that lowers your school property taxes. If your income is less than \$500,000, you are probably entitled to this benefit.

Who is eligible?

To be eligible, you must own and live at your primary residence. There are two levels of benefits—Basic STAR and Enhanced STAR, plus a local option for Senior Citizens' Exemption.

- **Basic STAR**—Total income must be \$500,000 or less, which is the combined income of:
 - a. all owners who live in the home, and
 - b. any owner's spouse who lives in the home.
- **Enhanced STAR**—All owners must be 65 or older, except for spouses or siblings, and total income must be \$84,550 or less, which is the combined income of:
 - a. all owners, and
 - b. any owner's spouse who lives in the home.

Senior Citizens'/Aged Exemption

The Senior Citizens' Exemption is a benefit program that reduces your property taxes by up to 50 percent. If you are 65 or older and earn \$24,899 or less, you may be eligible for this in addition to Enhanced Star. You must apply with your assessor for this exemption.

FAQ

How do I apply for Basic STAR?

File an application with your assessor. STAR applications are available from the assessor's office or on the State website at: www.tax.ny.gov.

How do I apply for Enhanced STAR?

File an application with the assessor. You must show that the household income was no greater than \$84,550 in 2014. You may do this in one of two ways:

Option 1—Traditional method

Provide the assessor with your STAR application, a copy of your 2014 income tax return, and a copy of any other owner's 2014 tax return. You will need to reapply each year to remain eligible.

Option 2—STAR Income Verification Program

Provide the assessor with your STAR application, a copy of your 2014 income tax return, a copy of any other owner's 2014 tax return, and Form RP-425-IVP, *Optional Income Verification Program*, which authorizes the New York Tax Department to verify your income eligibility each year. With this option, you won't need to reapply each year.

All STAR applications need to be submitted as of March 1 of the year you are applying for.

Please contact your town assessor if you have questions regarding property tax exemptions:

BATAVIA

Rhonda Saulsbury
(585) 343-1729 ext. 207

BERGEN

Rhonda Saulsbury
(585) 494-1484 ext. 1

BYRON

Barry Flansburg
(585) 548-7123 ext. 17

CLARENDON

Cindi Davis
(585) 638-6371 ext. 103

ELBA

Barry Flansburg
(585) 757-2462 ext. 2

LEROY

Rhonda Saulsbury
(585) 768-6910 ext. 221

RIGA

Lori Frongetta
(585) 293-3880 ext. 126

STAFFORD

Anne Sapienza
(585) 344-1554 ext. 6

SWEDEN

Tony Eaffaldano
(585) 637-8693

SUBSTITUTES WANTED

Do you have an interest in helping Byron-Bergen CSD in the capacity of substitute teacher, substitute teacher aide, or substitute office aide? If so, please visit the employment section of our website at www.bbschools.org and complete the non-instructional application (teacher aide or office aide), and instructional application (substitute teacher). Please submit the application (via mail or in person) to: P. Gunio - District Office, Byron-Bergen CSD, 6917 West Bergen Road, Bergen, NY 14416

Pesticide Application Notice

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation enacted a program that requires all schools to provide you with information about pesticide product applications made throughout the school year. Under State law, the school is required to maintain a list of parents, guardians, and staff who wish to receive 48-hour advance written notice prior to a pesticide application. At this time we are informing you that we sprayed for bees twice in the Byron-Bergen CSD since the last notification was published in the 2015-16 District Calendar (August, 2015). To register your name with the school to be on a 48-hour notification list, send a request to Byron-Bergen Central School District Office, 6917 W. Bergen Rd., Bergen, NY 14416. A written request must be submitted annually.



STUDENT SHOWCASE



“Dinosaur Shape Building”

Paper and crayon

By: James Lamb, kindergarten
Art teacher: Mrs. Coniglio



“Unity”

Computer graphic arts & design

By: Catherine Brumsted, Quinn Chapell and Ben Lathan, grade 10; Dominick Andres and Kitana Maher, grade 11
Art teacher: Mrs. Auer



“Rose Window”

Marker on color diffusing paper

By: John Mercovich, grade 7
Art teacher: Mrs. Auer



“Color Theory Shapes”

Colored pencil on paper

By: Brianna Shade, grade 9
Art teacher: Mrs. Fritz



“Pop Art Hands”

Paint on paper

By: Mr. Rogoyski's fifth-grade class
Art teacher: Mrs. Coniglio



FOCAL POINT

SUPERINTENDENT

Casey Kosiorek

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Debra List, *President*
Daniel Ireland, *Vice President*
Yvonne Ace-Wagoner
William Forsyth
Tammy Menzie
Amy Phillips
Jennifer VanValkenburg

EDITOR

Gayla Starowitz

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Karen Slayton

www.bbschools.org

Byron-Bergen Central School District
Bergen, NY 14416

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

Commemorating 30 years at Sports Boosters Stadium

A ceremony on October 1 recognized the hard work and dedication of the many community members who played a part in building and expanding the Byron-Bergen Sports Boosters Stadium. Two plaques were dedicated: one to the three pioneers who made their dream of a student sports center a reality, and one to the many local families who have supported the stadium for the past 30 years.

Community leaders Marty Krause, John Jessop, and Bill Maurer were on hand to receive their own copies of the formal dedication plaque that will grace the stadium wall. The three men are responsible for having the determination to create a place that has become an integral part of our community and that has served generations of families. Their vision of a local sports stadium and playing field serving student athletes has been supported through the years by members of the Capurso, Downs, Funke, Hale, Hayes, Hill, Jessop, Leslie, Maurer, Krause, Kunego, Reding and Sherwood families, who were also honored at the night's ceremony.



Byron-Bergen's Sports Boosters Stadium was honored to welcome founders (l-r) Marty Krause, Bill Maurer, and John Jessop to the field that generations of student athletes have played on.



The Hundred Club

New Byron-Bergen Hundred Club members (l-r) Ana Hubbard, Ashley Montgomery, and Olivia Audsley are congratulated by Jr./Sr. High School Principal Aaron Johnson and Interim Principal Patrick McGee. The Hundred Club is an exclusive recognition for students achieving a perfect score on the most recent Regents exams.