

The Reader

Educating Everyone Takes Everyone

Fall 2016

Continuing Our Commitment to Academic Excellence: A Superintendent's Perspective

By Joseph P. Dragone, Ph.D.

It is an honor and a privilege to welcome everyone to the 2016-2017 school year, and a special welcome to our 300+ new kindergarten students and to those of you who are new to our school community! We are off to a great start, and programs in the schools, sports competitions, meet the teacher nights, PTA events and all of the student activities are well underway. It is truly an exciting time to be in the Ballston Spa school community. I invite parents and community members to join us and be an active part of our school district as we continue our commitment to educational excellence and supporting our top priority of focusing on the academic achievement of all students.

We have so much to be proud of and so much more to look forward to. Our students, staff and schools continue to receive honors and accolades at all levels and the pride in our work can be seen throughout the district every day. The Ballston Spa High School has recently been named to the *America's Top High Schools* list again this year by Newsweek magazine. Our school community is also the home of a National Schools to Watch Middle School, two National PTA Schools of Excellence, two National No Place for Hate Schools, and countless achievements in athletics, the fine and performing arts and co-curricular academic clubs. I am proud, as I hope you are, of the incredible opportunities we provide for all of our students. Whether in the classroom, on the field, on the stage, at an art gallery, on a college campus or anywhere else, I never cease to be amazed by the work of our talented students and staff.

We are pleased to be completing the final phase of an extensive facilities renovation and improvement plan which began in 2010. As we begin the new school year, final site work has been completed at the Wood Road Elementary School complex including a new bus loop and parking lots for visitors and staff. Please note designated parking areas for parents and visitors as well as new traffic patterns at the complex.

Parents should be aware of and inform their children to be prepared for additional safety drills that will be held in the schools starting this fall. Although we have been conducting lockdown drills in our schools for many years in collaboration with local first responders, new regulations require that we have four of these drills in addition to four fire drills prior to December 31. Dates for the lockdown drills in each of our schools have been established, and additional building specific information will be coming home from the school principals. Please also note that students will have a half day of classes on October 28, 2016 while staff participate in professional development activities during the afternoon.

Please take a minute and confirm your contact information in our student database – SchoolTool – and your communication preferences in our SchoolMessenger system; both can be found in the Parent Resources section on our webpage. Be sure to visit our website often for information updates and to learn more about district and school events. For up to the minute information and frequent district announcements, you are encouraged to follow us on Twitter @BSCSD or myself @BSpaSupt. Please know that all of our schools, many departments and grade levels also have Twitter accounts and you are encouraged to follow them for timely building level information and announcements.

I invite you to enjoy this school year with us – please join us at a PTA meeting, stop out to catch a home game, concert, theatre production, art show or participate in the Community Spirit Parade. Plan to join us at our Fall Family Festival on October 22, 2016, or attend the Robot Rumble, an elementary level Code-A-Thon, visit Super Science Saturday and enjoy the wide range of opportunities we are proud to provide for our students. Above all, please get to know your child's teacher(s) and principal so we can work together to support student success.

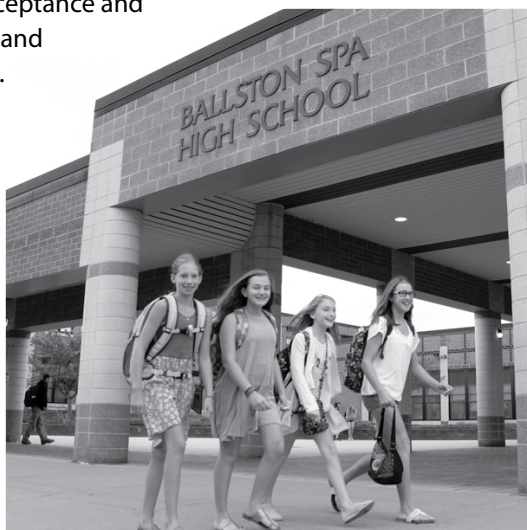
Best wishes to everyone for a great school year!

High School Cited Again for Career and College Readiness by Newsweek Magazine

The Ballston Spa High School has been named to the *America's Top High Schools* list again this year by Newsweek magazine. According to Newsweek, the 500 top high schools selected for 2016 do the best job in preparing students for college. Schools across the nation were ranked based on college acceptance and enrollment, SAT and ACT participation and performance, AP and IB participation and performance, dual enrollment programs and guidance and counseling resources.

Since 2010, the district has continued to receive national recognition based on academic opportunity and performance. Ballston Spa High School (BSHS) was also recently recognized on The Washington Post's list of the 2016 America's Most Challenging High Schools, with prior recognitions in 2015, 2014 and 2011. The High School was previously recognized by Newsweek on the America's Best High Schools list in 2010 and 2013 based on an increased number of students taking Advanced Placement examinations and an increase in the assessment scores. The school was also cited as one of "America's Best High Schools" by U.S. News & World Report, along with twice receiving the national "AP Achievement Award" from the College Board for increasing student access to AP coursework while maintaining achievement levels.

Ballston Spa instructional staff members are to be commended for their focus on excellence in the classroom. New offerings at BSHS in 2016-2017 include an expansion of the district's partnership with Proctors to offer a Media Works course and Artist-in-Residency in 9th grade, integrating ELA with filmmaking and technology. An expanded partnership with Schenectady County Community College will also provide students the opportunity to enroll in an additional 18 courses for college credit.



The Ballston Spa Central School District

Follow us on Twitter @BSCSD

**Gordon Creek
Elementary School**
884-7270

**Milton Terrace
Elementary School**
884-7210

**Wood Road
Elementary School**
884-7290

**Malta Avenue
Elementary School**
884-7250

Ballston Spa Middle School
884-7200

Ballston Spa High School
884-7150

Ballston Spa District Office
884-7195

Transportation Facility
884-7140

www.bscsd.org

District Accomplishments

Ballston Spa Schools Honor Former Board of Education President

The Board of Education and Administration recently held a dedication ceremony in honor of former Board of Education President Kathleen Jarvis. The service was held in front of the Malta Avenue School building where a bench and tree were installed in recognition of the 19 years of service which she gave to the district. Kathy was the first woman in the history of the school district to serve as Board of Education President. She led the school district in that capacity for seven consecutive terms.

Mrs. Jarvis' commitment to Ballston Spa children's education was demonstrated by her focus on providing them with the best learning opportunities that the local community could afford. Those programs included guidelines for smaller class sizes, the International Baccalaureate Program, Sponsor-A-Scholar, the Early College High School at TEC- SMART, an enhanced art curriculum and numerous facilities improvements.

During her tenure, the Ballston Spa Central School District improved steadily in ranking among the other school districts in the Capital Region. The district is now recognized nationally for having one of the more challenging academic programs in the nation and more educational opportunities for students than most districts.

Kathy was an enthusiastic leader who championed the community as a founding member of the Ballston Spa Business and Professional Association as well as serving on the local BOCES board. She was also a member of the board of directors for the Northeast March of Dimes Organization and was instrumental in the establishment of the Ballston Spa Educational Foundation in 1996.

Speaking to friends and family at the dedication ceremony were former Board of Education members Keith Stewart, Doug Young, Pat Leanza and Frank Townley, as well as administrators Dr. Raymond Colucciello and current Superintendent Joseph P. Dragone, Ph.D. The tree and bench located in front of the school will be enjoyed by students and families and serve as a permanent reminder of Kathy's dedication and service to the district.



Joseph P. Dragone, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools, (l) and Board of Education President Kevin Schaefer (r) presented Saratoga Project Management with a plaque at the opening day ceremonies.

Extra Mile Award Presented to District Partners

The district presented an Extra Mile Award to two organizations for their involvement in the district during the 2016 opening ceremonies at the High School. The district recognized Saratoga Project Management for their leadership and commitment to serving the district for the past eight years during the implementation of the district's facility improvement projects. Specifically, Bill McMordie, Principal, and Will Corrigan, Project Manager, were recognized and thanked for all of their hard work and effort to successfully complete the various building projects and improvements throughout the district.

Proctors was also presented an award for their commitment to expanding the performing arts in our schools. They have supported professional theater arts programs and productions in collaboration with teachers at Gordon Creek Elementary School for the past two years. This year, they will also support an Artist-in-Residency program at the High School as the district launches a new freshman class that combines English, Media Arts and Video Production.

MBPA Donates \$5K to Partnership for Innovation in Education Fund

The Malta Business & Professional Association (MBPA) recently hosted the 8th annual Taste of Malta at Hudson Valley Community College's TEC-SMART in Malta. The evening featured a variety of area restaurants who served samples of their best fare to over 200 attendees. As they have for the past six years, the MBPA donated event proceeds to the Ballston Spa Central School District to support educational enrichment programs and initiatives. This year's event raised \$5,000 for the Ballston Spa Partnership for Innovation in Education Fund, a component fund of the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region. The funding will be used to support the district's Clean Technologies & Sustainable Industries Early College High School, implemented at TEC-SMART in partnership with Hudson Valley Community College and NYSEERDA.



In the photo are Joseph P. Dragone, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools, Laura Siracuse, MBPA President, Karen McGowan, Taste of Malta Chairperson, and Board of Education President Kevin Schaefer at the check presentation held during the opening ceremonies of the new school year.

Education Exhibit Receives First Place Award at the Saratoga County Fair

Saratoga County Fair officials awarded the Ballston Spa Central School District's display of student artwork and projects the first place school exhibit in this year's countywide competition! Student artwork and academic projects were entered from all six schools in the district, producing an outstanding exhibit. Student projects ranged from individual artwork to photography. Additional awards were also given to individual students for their artwork and projects that were on display in the exhibit. This year's award winners include Amelia Delong and Jacob Powell from Gordon Creek Elementary School; Shooter Howe from Malta Avenue Elementary School; Noah Pine from Milton Terrace Elementary School; Maia DiFiore, Nicholas Furnia and Olivia DeRagon from Ballston Spa High School as well as James Prastio and Caitlyn Donnelly from Ballston Spa Middle School. The Middle School also received an award for the group project they displayed focusing on the No Place for Hate program completed by Art Teacher Mrs. Kristina Guernsey and students.

Ballston Spa Sponsor-A-Scholar Program Celebrates Student Success

The Ballston Spa High School Class of 2016 included nine students that participated in the Ballston Spa Sponsor-A-Scholar program, starting as sophomores. The students were congratulated at a ceremony held at the end of the year. Several Sponsor-A-Scholar graduates who have now completed their first year of college or have graduated from college also attended the ceremony and provided their words of wisdom and insights into the college experience. The program is designed to provide the extra supports necessary for students to successfully complete high school and pursue post-secondary education. The students in this year's class were excited to graduate and begin the next step in their education.

The program is coordinated by Ballston Spa High School guidance counselors Cathy Roy and Kevin Flores with mentors provided by the I am I can organization. Support for the program is provided by area corporations including Stewart's Shops, Technical Building Services, The Ballston Spa Rotary, BSTA, The National Guard, Skidmore College, Gerome Technologies, Saratoga's Community FCU, Capital Region Sponsor-A-Scholar, Inc. and individual donors. Contributions to provide resources for the next class of students can be sent to *The Ballston Spa Partnership for Innovation in Education Fund*, Office of District Advancement, BSCSD, 70 Malta Avenue, Ballston Spa, NY 12020. Additional information is available on the guidance webpage via the Ballston Spa High School website or by contacting the Guidance Office at 884-7150 ext. 2362.

Ride for Missing Children Visits Malta Avenue Elementary School

The students and staff at Malta Avenue recently welcomed the 9th Annual Ride for Missing Children Greater Capital District. The bicycle riders shared information on safety with the students as they were raising awareness of the Child Abduction Prevention Education Program with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. Additional information is on the district website on the student safety page.



Fall Family Festival Hosted by Ballston Spa Schools

Everyone throughout the school community is invited to Ballston Spa Central School District's Fall Family Festival presented by Ballston Spa National Bank on October 22, 2016 from 10 am-3 pm at Ellms Family Farm located at 448 Charlton Road in Ballston Spa. Over 35 activities for children will be available, including the giant jumping pillow, a corn maze, zip lines, and much more. Information and exhibits will also be provided by the Ballston Spa schools, students and related organizations. Thank you to our Title Sponsor Ballston Spa National Bank. Partial proceeds from the event will benefit the Ballston Spa Partnership for Innovation in Education Fund, a component fund of the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region.

and Happenings

Class of 2016 IB Diploma Candidates Honored for Achievements



The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma candidates included: Dominik Monterroso, Patrick Haller, Stephan Washburn, Shelby Collins, Abigail Frederick, Bailey Bensen, Maegan Aldous, Brielle Wheeler, Shaina Gormley, Danica Smith, Vince Whipple, Ellinor Rutkey, Hannah Serencsics, Mari Robinson, Anna Zink, Olivia Sanders, Noah Cowit, Eli Bashant, Zachary Pinto, Hunter Bischoff, and Masen Webster.

The Board of Education recognized 21 International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma candidates from the Class of 2016 for their achievements before their graduation from BSHS in June. The IB students had completed this very demanding two year program of study. The program is offered at the High School and is internationally known for its rigor and quality. In addition to taking IB courses these students all finished a demanding 4,000 word essay on the topic of their choice and engaged in a range of extracurricular activities that encourage creativity, physical activity and community service. From knitting and donating hats to Code Blue, to collecting books and making homemade bookmarks for the Red Book Shelf program, to cleaning the cafeteria with the

custodians for a week, it's amazing to see how much they accomplished. These students will continue to be life-long learners and are prepared to effectively participate in an increasingly global society. This year will bring a variety of different experiences for these students and whether it's pursuing a college education, joining the military or participating in an international rotary exchange program, they will all continue to truly amaze us as BSHS alumni.

To learn more about the International Baccalaureate Diploma program at BSHS, please visit the website or call the Guidance Office at (518) 884-7150 ext. 2367.

BSTA Continues to Provide Support for Students



The Ballston Spa Teachers' Association (BSTA) awarded scholarships to graduating students Kathryn Ashworth, Molly Purcell and Hannah Serencsics. Each one-time award is for \$1,500 and is funded solely through donations from BSTA members and fundraisers. The awards are specifically given to students who plan to pursue a career in education or a related field. BSTA President Kim Pusatere indicated that a total of 35 applications were submitted by members of the Class of 2016. The three recipients selected were dedicated students who had taken full advantage of the available academic opportunities in BSHS. In addition, the BSTA continues to provide items for students during back-to-school orientations including water bottles for the ninth graders, locker magnets and bookmarks for the sixth graders and reading books for the incoming Kindergarten students. Thanks to all the members of the BSTA!

Ballston Spa Athletics

Ballston Spa Athletes Commit to College Teams



The Ballston Spa Central School District's Athletic Department hosted a signing ceremony for the 2016 graduating athletes who continued their participation on Division 1 or 2 teams this year in college. The athletes and their sport included (L-R) Jesse Haraden (Swimming), Kristina Keefe (Swimming), Zack Durfee (Baseball) and Aleah Abdellatif (Lacrosse) in the back row, and Rachel Parsons (Soccer), Connor DeFilipis (Soccer), Hans Zimmer (Lacrosse) and Jack Fitzgerald (Track) in the front row.

Please visit the Athletic Department webpages for updated information about the current sports season, including teams, schedules, directions and student achievements. Look for the link under the Departments tab on the front page of the district site at www.bscsd.org or follow on Twitter @B_Spa_Athletics.



District partner Healthy Living NY provides health snacks and related items to the Ballston Spa community as a sponsor of our home football games this fall.



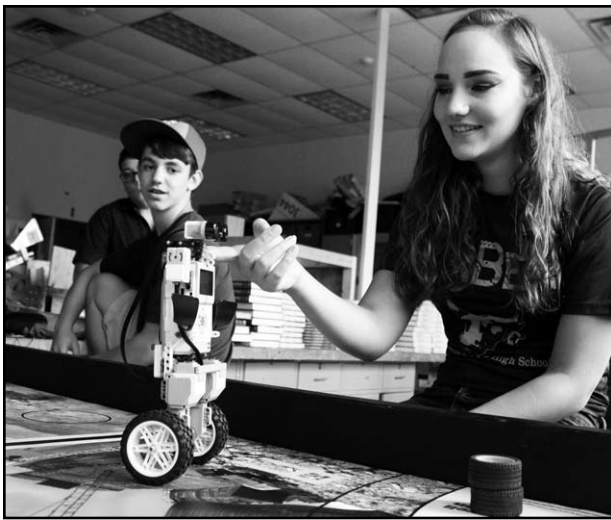
The Varsity Girls Softball team completed their record season as Section II Class AA Champions, Class AA Region Champions and the runners up in the NYSFHSAA championships.

Robotics Teams Prepare for Upcoming Competitions

The High School's FIRST Robotics Challenge (FRC) Team 3044 is once again helping to organize and mentor the younger students and teams that participate in the FIRST LEGO League (FLL) and FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) competitions. FRC Team 3044 will provide support to the FLL teams by offering Saturday work sessions to help the younger teams prepare for their competition. Members of the FIRST Robotics Team 3044 will share their experiences with robotics, help celebrate the release of the 2016-17 Animal Allies Challenge and help the students develop some strategies for the regional contest. The regional FLL tournament is scheduled for December 3, 2016 in the Ballston Spa Middle School.



Ballston Spa students in grades 4-7 are eligible to participate on the FLL teams in their respective schools. Through the donations of corporate sponsors, the district will be fielding seven FLL teams for the 2016-17 season with Gordon Creek, Malta Avenue,



Milton Terrace, and Wood Road schools each having a team of up to ten students and the Middle School having three teams. The district also has formed a FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) team which includes 8th & 9th grade students. Their 2016-17 challenge is Velocity Vortex and they are already busy preparing for their competition in January.
High school FRC teams from throughout the Capital Region and the Northeast will be convening at Ballston Spa High School on Saturday, November 5, 2016 for the annual Robot Rumble Off-Season Robotics Competition. Off-season competitions provide an opportunity for teams to have fun and to recruit new students, industry mentors and sponsors as they begin preparing for the Regional FRC Competition in March 2017.
The district's Robotics initiative has once again received generous support from the Ballston Spa National Bank, title sponsor of the Robotics team

since its rookie year, to fund the team's participation in the annual US FIRST® Robotics competition. The \$6,000 in funding, combined with additional corporate sponsorships and team fundraising, will allow the team to design and construct a robot according to this year's specifications, participate in regional competitions, and continue to expand the Robotics initiatives to additional students in the district.
For more information on the district's Robotics initiative, please email K-12 Science Coordinator Diane Irwin at dirwin@bscsd.org or call 518-884-7150. Please visit the High School Team 3044 Robotics website at <http://team3044.com/> or the FIRST® Robotics website directly at <http://www.usfirst.org/> for additional details.



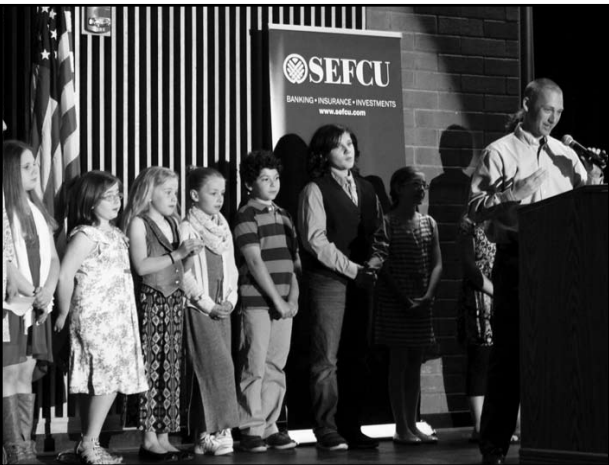
Student Donations to Community Charities Surpass \$73,000

Ballston Spa students have successfully donated \$73,105 to local non-profit organizations during the past nine years through participation in an annual Penny Harvest program. This past year, students collected over \$6,600 in pennies during the SEFCU Penny Harvest and donated the funds to nine local non-profit organizations. Over 80 students were chosen as leaders in their schools and were responsible for researching local community issues and the non-profit organizations that address them. Members of the student roundtable in each school interviewed representatives from local organizations and discussed how their funds could be used to further support these non-profits.
SEFCU Penny Harvest is implemented in grades K-12 and has proven to be successful in educating students



in service learning, financial literacy, and 21st Century learning skills. This program teaches students about the importance of philanthropy and service as well as teaching math, communication, and team building skills.
The Malta Avenue Elementary School students donated to two organizations, Double H Ranch (\$719.44) and CAPTAIN Youth and Family Services (\$900). The Brave Will Foundation received \$1,406.97 from Gordon Creek Elementary School students and \$1,180.57 from Milton Terrace Elementary School students. Students at Wood Road Elementary School chose to donate \$900 to 11th Hour Canine Rescue

NY. The Middle School students chose to award funds to the American Diabetes Association (\$500) and Saratoga War Horse (\$500). High School students donated their funds to the Ballston Area Community Center (\$430) and Scotties Pantry (\$70).
The program is implemented in the fall of each school year and the monetary awards are presented to local charities in May. The district is very grateful to SEFCU for sponsoring the program and processing over 660,000 pennies. Pennies will now be collected in each of the district's six buildings as students again "harvest" them during the fall. Student roundtables will be formed in the next few months and community grants will be awarded in the spring of 2017.



Join us in the schools and see our students in a variety of performances, including the BSHS fall play in November, concerts throughout December and the BSMS in late January.

Clean Tech ECHS

The district, along with our higher education and business partners, currently operates the highly successful Clean Technologies & Sustainable Industries Early College High School (Clean Tech ECHS). The program prepares students from throughout the region for college and careers in the fields of renewable energy, computer science and advanced technologies including semiconductor manufacturing. The mission of the program is to develop and support pathways to higher education that lead to careers in STEM fields through rigorous academic programming and a collaborative approach to learning. The regional program now serves 275 students in

grades 9-12 from over 21 school districts in 10 counties. Students complete the program simultaneously as they graduate from high school with up to 30 college credits.

The Clean Tech ECHS was developed by the Ballston Spa Central School District in partnership with Hudson Valley Community College (HVCC) and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) in 2011. It now has over 50 partners from business and industry, higher education, and non-profit and government agencies. The Clean Tech ECHS was awarded a NYS P-TECH grant by Governor Cuomo which expanded opportunities for students in the program to take college coursework in one of four career pathways: Clean Energy; Computer Science & Information Systems; Entrepreneurship, Leadership & Innovation; and Mechatronics. The program is hosted in HVCC's Training and Education Center for Semiconductor Manufacturing and Alternative and Renewable Technologies (TEC-SMART) in Malta.

ECHS Students Begin the 2016-17 School Year

During this past summer, the students in the P-TECH program continued to explore STEM topics and prepared for the upcoming school year. Both ninth and tenth graders attended an ECHS Summer Bridge Program in July. Ninth graders took an exciting trip to the Wild Center in Tupper Lake, where they created videos to demonstrate their understanding of how the Wild Center was designed and is modeling sustainability.

The tenth graders spent their week exploring different career pathways via hands on workshops and activities. They also worked together to create solar cookers and exhibited them on their last day.

In this NYS P-TECH program, students in grades nine and ten begin to accrue college credits and are matched up with mentors from various

business partners who help to guide them through their career planning. In addition to online coursework and mentoring, the students in the ninth and tenth grade programs are also participating in an on-site visit each month during the school year.

Students in the ninth grade program are now deep in their coursework for the online 21st Century Skills class. They are collaborating with students from other school districts and creating an infographic highlighting the "Habits of Mind" from the summer program. In the spring semester, students will take a one credit college course, College Forum, from HVCC.

Students in the tenth grade program are taking the online high school course 21st Century College and Workplace Readiness. In the high school course, students will begin to explore the different career pathways: Clean Energy; Computer Science & Information Systems; Entrepreneurship, Leadership & Innovation; and Mechatronics, that they will pursue in their junior year. Tenth grade students will take two online college courses in their sophomore year, Communications and Introduction to Psychology. By the end of their sophomore year, students have the opportunity to earn up to seven college credits, including the one credit from their ninth grade year.

Students in the eleventh and twelfth grade program are on-site for half of each school day, taking both high school and college course work simultaneously. Currently, the eleventh grade students are working on a research based infographic on bioenergy, while the seniors are working on a marketing campaign. There are also many upcoming field trips to provide students with additional information on their area of study and real world experiences. The students throughout the Clean Tech ECHS are off to a great start to the school year!

Clean Tech ECHS Celebrates 2016 Graduation & Student Project Exhibition

The Clean Tech ECHS celebrated the Class of 2016 Graduation and the annual Capstone Project Exhibition at the end of the school year. Community members, partners, faculty and staff congratulated the 51 graduates from 16 high schools throughout the region on their successful completion of this rigorous program. Astria Solutions Group presented their annual STEM scholarship to graduating seniors Simon Will and Thomas Marron. The \$4,000 scholarship is awarded each spring to graduating seniors who are

pursuing college coursework and a career in a STEM field. The scholarship was split this year between the two students; each will receive \$250 per semester for up to 8 semesters while they pursue college coursework and a career in a STEM field.

The event concluded with the Junior and Senior Capstone Project Exhibition where students shared their innovative solutions to real world problems with over 300 partners and attendees, discussed the innovative technology they used to engineer their products and presented their business plans to partners. More information on the students' innovative projects and their future plans can be found on the website in the Graduation Program.

Learn More at Upcoming Information Night

The Clean Tech ECHS will also host an information night for current 8th grade students from across the Capital Region on November 3, 2016 at 6:30 pm. School district leaders, parents and high school students interested in learning more about the program are invited to attend the information session, followed by optional tours of the facility. The agenda for the evening includes presentations from current students and program staff. The information session and program is located at HVCC's TEC-SMART at 345 Hermes Road in Malta, NY. Please plan to join us to learn more about the programs, how to enroll students and/or the business partnership opportunities that support the students in the program. For more information, please visit the Clean Tech ECHS website at <http://www.bscsd.org/cleanTech.cfm> or contact ECHS Coordinator Adrienne Snow at @bscsd.org or 321-7274.

Please follow the Clean Tech ECHS program on Twitter @CleanTechECHS for the latest news and updates.



The Middle School Peer Leaders welcome and provide tours for the incoming students during orientation this fall.



Staff News and Notes



Extra Mile Awards Presented at Superintendent’s Conference Day

The district recently recognized staff and school community members that are making a significant positive contribution to the school community. The “Extra Mile” awards program formally honors those staff members who exemplify the district’s core values of commitment and involvement. People are acknowledged based on several criteria, including those who act as a positive change agent, demonstrate leadership, motivate others in the pursuit of excellence, and/or develop creative and innovative solutions that have benefited members of the school community. Additional criteria include recognizing those who attain significant achievements that are recognized by the community and the people who create and demonstrate a belief and commitment to the district’s motto that “Educating Everyone Takes Everyone”.

Complete information on the award recipients is located on the Superintendent’s webpage. Staff members recognized this year include Trudy Kump, School Aide, Ballston Spa Middle School; Dawn Woodruff and Carm Isabella, Crossing Guards, Malta Avenue Elementary School; Sharon Karkotsky, Teaching Assistant, Gordon Creek Elementary School; Brian Hof and Mary Jo Thompson, Cleaners, Ballston Spa High School; and Amy Laurin, Math Teacher, Milton Terrace Elementary School.

New Staff Members Join the District

The district welcomed over 30 new staff members at the beginning of the 2016-17 school year. New employees attended orientation before the school year started and are now busy getting acclimated into their respective roles throughout the district. Please extend a welcome to them as you visit our schools and district facilities. New staff members (and location) include:

District Office – Madeleine Petraglia; Gordon Creek Elementary School – Amy Fealey, Amanda Fifield, and Caitlin Iannotti; Malta Avenue Elementary School – Edna Chung, Emily O’Connor, and Kelly Seymour; Milton Terrace Elementary School – Kathleen Ballard, Rebecca Lyons, and Erin Vooris; Wood Road Elementary School – Valarie Karas, Debra Rancour, Angela Nagle, and Lisa Srokowski; Middle School – Amanda Lucas, Kimberly Jacobs, Matthew Wright, Catherine Cassella, Jessica Lorenzetti, Eric Nelsen, and Dominick Spylios; High School – Emma Dooley, Jenna Singer, Keith Reilly, Jessica Bouchard, Regina Murphy, and Anita Stevens; Transportation – Jamie Antinore, Robert Pace, Samantha Smith, and Cindy Winslow.

New Faces On Our Leadership Teams

Valarie Karas was appointed by the Board of Education as the Principal of the Wood Road Elementary School during the summer months. Mrs. Karas was selected from a competitive group of qualified candidates that included many strong administrators with a variety of educational experiences. Mrs. Karas most recently served as the district’s Coordinator of Elementary Curriculum and Instruction. She joined the district in 2012 and since then has supported all aspects of our elementary educational program, including providing

professional development for staff. Ms. Karas holds degrees from Russell Sage College, Sage Graduate School, Hofstra University and is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Literacy Teaching and Learning at the University at Albany, State University of New York.

Matthew Wright joined the district earlier this summer as the Secondary Supervisor for Special Education, grades 6-12. He joins us from the Guilderland Central School District where he was a School Social Worker at the high school. He received his Master’s in Social Work from the University at Albany, State University of New York, and completed his Building and District Leadership certifications through University at Stony Brook, State University of New York.

Angela Nagle, Ph.D. was recently appointed as the Supervisor of Special Education for grades K-5. She joins the district from the East Greenbush Central School District where she held several administrative positions. She completed her Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Administration and Policy Studies at the University at Albany, State University of New York, and holds certifications in the areas of administration, elementary education, special education, diversified cooperative education and business and distributive education.

The Board of Education appointed Madeleine Petraglia as the Coordinator of District Advancement during the summer months. Ms. Petraglia holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Stonehill College and most recently served as the Coordinator of Workforce & Education Initiatives for the Center for Economic Growth. She is responsible for supporting business, education and workforce partnerships, district development programs and grant management.



Staff Members Receive Tenure

Teachers and Teaching Assistants were recognized for receiving tenure at a Board of Education meeting before the end of the school year. Nineteen staff members in the Ballston Spa Central School District received their tenure appointment from the Board of Education. The principals from each school presented their staff members and noted their commitment to supporting the students in the district. Board of Education President Kevin Schaefer expressed appreciation and congratulations to the tenured educators on behalf of the Board. They are shown in the photo with administrators and Board members.

Teachers receiving tenure in the Ballston Spa Central School District included Malta Avenue Elementary School teacher Christine Darmofal, Milton Terrace Elementary School teachers Aimee LaMountain and Tia Pelneau, Wood Road Elementary School teachers Andrew Ferrone, Kristin O’Connor, and Rachael Osinski, and Gordon Creek Elementary School teachers Kaitlin Ahl and Monica Parmenter. Teachers receiving tenure at the Ballston Spa Middle School included Michelle Brandt, Jessica Corwin, Jamie Ivers, Hilary Northrop and Melinda Whisenhunt, as well as teachers Karin Marcotullio, Jason Walton and Ank Meuwissen at the Ballston Spa High School. In addition, Teaching Assistants receiving a tenure appointment included Bridget Vesic at the Ballston Spa Middle School, Amy Heim at the Milton Terrace Elementary School and Jessica Gurwitz at the Wood Road Elementary School.



District Retirees Honored by Board of Education

The Ballston Spa Board of Education and staff recognized the retirement of 23 staff members that left the district at a ceremony and reception at the end of the school year. The dedication and service that they brought to the district during their collective 600+ years of service will definitely be missed by the school community. Please join in expressing appreciation to all of them for their commitment to the students of Ballston Spa during their many years of service, including: Martina Belanger, Joan Campbell, Patricia Card, John DeGuardi, Suzanne Goetz, Debra Hodgson, Cynthia Hoetzer, Melissa Jones, Laurie Kennedy, Carl Knuth, Laura Kohler, Bonnie Marshall, Calvin S. McCloud, S. Joyce Moreau, Carol O’Brien, Shawn Reed, George Schacher, Kristin Shaw, Gina Sicluna, Mary Smith, Michelle Strenk, Jeannine Toney, and Janet Verdon.



Ballston Spa High School instructor Bernadette Wehr was presented with the Empire State Excellence in Teaching Award from NYS Civil Service Commissioner Lola Brabham on behalf of the Governor’s Office. Each year, the program recognizes teachers from 10 different regions of New York and gives the honorees a \$5,000 stipend to support their professional development interests.

Staff Member Spotlights and Recognition

The district is proud of the talented and diverse staff that we have working in the Ballston Spa Central School District. The Human Resources Office has created two new features on the district website for school community members to learn more about the people who work in the district as well as a spot to recognize those that go above and beyond. Please visit the Human Resources webpage and the Staff Spotlight section monthly to learn more about our staff. Also, please let us know about any of our staff who deserves praise by sending them a **Scottie Shout-Out** or a formal recognition by filling out a **Cause for Applause** form.

Community Opportunities

Ballston Spa Community Spirit Week

The Ballston Spa school community combined efforts again this year to celebrate school and community pride during the annual Community Spirit Week in late September. This year, the students planned for a week full of activities including a pep rally on Wednesday evening, a Community Spirit Parade before the annual Friday night Homecoming football game and the annual fall dance on Saturday. Ballston Spa students volunteered to paint windows of businesses throughout the village with purple and gold spirit week themes. Organizations from throughout the area and members of various school groups also participated in the annual Community Spirit Parade through town, with this year's theme focusing on "The Movies". The parade was organized as a collaboration of the Mayor and Village of Ballston Spa, the Ballston Spa Business & Professional Association, the Ballston Spa High School Student Council and interested community members.

Scottie's Closet Offers Clothing to Families

The Middle School will host a Scottie's Closet on Saturday, October 22, 2016 from 9 am to 1 pm. This school community event provides free gently used clothing, books, coats, and shoes annually to about 300 students, families and individuals. It is organized by Middle School social workers Gaylen Wichrowski and Christine Jones, along with numerous parent representatives, school and community volunteers. All of the items donated by the school community are provided free to students, families and members of the community. This annual community event would not be possible without the tireless efforts of school and community volunteers who donate, sort and merchandise all of the items in the cafeteria. Please contact the Middle School for additional information at 884-7200.

Ballston Spa Offers Community Swim Opportunities

The Aquatics Program is currently offering opportunities for public use of the pool during adult lap swimming sessions, from 6:00-7:00 am on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings and on Tuesday & Thursday evenings (times vary). A family/ open swim is also offered on Saturday afternoons from 12:30-2:30 pm. The community swim program is open to district students, families and community members who pay a \$1.00 entrance fee to utilize the pool. Additional opportunities are offered throughout the year, including adult Zumba & Aqua Cardio classes and a Learn-To-Swim program, offered in partnership with the Saratoga YMCA. Information is available on the website by clicking on the aquatics/pool button on the left side of the homepage or contacting the pool office directly at 884-7150 ext. 2324.



Walking Program Offers Adults Fitness Opportunity

The district's Walk About program provides a safe, indoor walking course within the Middle and High Schools for those interested in a low impact fitness activity. The program runs from October through the annual spring recess, Monday through Thursday evenings from 6:00-7:30 pm, when school is in session. Registration is required by utilizing the forms available on the website, or by calling the District Office at 884-7195 ext. 1329.

District Continues Community Recycling Program



The district is now a zero sort recycling facility. We are encouraging the community to recycle their paper, cans, bottles, plastics and cardboard by utilizing the recycling bins at the Transportation Facility on Route 50. Any proceeds are returned to the school district and shared amongst the schools to support recycling efforts.

Community Information and Flyers Now Online

Information from local, non-profit organizations and/or partners of the district is now being posted on the district and school websites for informational purposes. Flyers formerly sent home with students are now available as a pdf file for easy access by parents and community members. This will reduce the amount of paper being sent home with students and is a more efficient manner to distribute information.

Halloween Concert

Presented by the
Ballston Spa Community Band
on October 26, 7:00 pm
at Wood Road
Elementary School



Ballston Spa students in grades 6-12 will make a full transition to Google Apps for Education this fall. Google Apps allow the students to create and save documents, spreadsheets and slideshows in a web browser, across all devices. They can also collaborate with other students on projects and share information with teachers electronically.



The Ballston Spa Rotary Club recently donated backpacks full of school supplies for students in the district after conducting their annual school supply drive.



Employees from the Ballston Spa National Bank volunteer during the first days of school each year to help assist with getting students into the schools as part of their community outreach program.

Ballston Spa Central School District

70 Malta Avenue
Ballston Spa, NY 12020

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Boxholder
Ballston Spa Central
School District

Welcome to the 2016-17 School Year

Students and teachers returned to the classrooms in early September and the school year is in full session. Over 4,200 students are now busy learning in their new classes and getting involved in many academic and extracurricular activities throughout the district. Please read about some of the happenings in this newsletter including information on district initiatives, community opportunities, student activities, and staff members. Additional information is always available and updated often on the school and district webpages, as well as the events calendar, so be sure to check for the latest details or call the school offices directly. Also, follow the district on Twitter @BSCSD or Instagram @BallstonSpaCSD for frequent updates and information.



Join Us at Our Upcoming School/Community Events

OCTOBER

- 11 Walk About Program Begins, Middle School Lobby, 6:00-7:30 pm
- 22 Scottie's Closet, Middle School Cafeteria, 9:00 am-1:00 pm
- 22 Fall Family Festival, Ellms Family Farm, 10:00 am-3:00 pm
- 26 Halloween Concert, Ballston Spa Community Band, Wood Road, 7:00 pm

NOVEMBER

- 3 FAFSA Workshop, High School Library, 6:30 pm
- 3 Early College High School Information Night, TEC-SMART, 6:30 pm
- 5 Robot Rumble, High School
- 12 Fall Production of "Peter and the Stargazer", High School Auditorium, 1:00 and 7:00 pm
- 18 Fall Production of "Peter and the Stargazer", High School Auditorium, 7:00 pm
- 19 Fall Production of "Peter and the Stargazer", High School Auditorium, 1:00 and 7:00 pm
- 19 Code-A-Thon, Wood Road Cafeteria/Gymnasium, 9:30 am

DECEMBER

- 1 High School Foreign Language Lip Sync, High School Auditorium, 7:00 pm
- 2 Ballston Spa Holiday Parade, Village, 6:30 pm
- 3 FIRST LEGO League Tournament, Middle School
- 6 High School Winter Concert, Part I, High School Auditorium, 7:30 pm
- 8 High School Winter Concert, Part II, High School Auditorium, 7:30 pm
- 8 College Athletics Information Night, High School Library, 6:30 pm
- 12 Middle School Winter Concert, 7th Grade, High School Auditorium, 7:00 pm
- 13 Middle School/High School Winter Concert, Grades 8-9, High School Auditorium, 7:30 pm
- 15 Milton Terrace Winter Concert, 7:00 pm
- 19 Middle School Winter Concert, 6th Grade, High School Auditorium, 7:00 pm
- 17 Gordon Creek Winter Concert, 7:00 pm

JANUARY

- 10 Malta Avenue Winter Concert, Auditorium, 7:00 pm
- 11 IB Information Night, High School Library, 6:00 pm
- 11 High School Theatre Scene Night I, Intro to Acting, Auditorium, 7:30 pm
- 12 High School Theatre Scene Night I, Intro to Theatre, Auditorium, 7:30 pm
- 12 Wood Road Winter Concert, Wood Road/Milton Terrace Cafeteria, 7:00 pm
- 21 Super Science Saturday, Wood Road/Milton Terrace Cafeteria, 10:00 am-1:00 pm
- 27 Launching Pad Production "Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka", High School Auditorium, 7:00 pm
- 28 Launching Pad Production "Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka", High School Auditorium, 1:00 and 7:00 pm

Complete event information is located on the district website's events calendar. All school specific events are listed on school sites and updated frequently. Please check often for the latest information, or call the appropriate school office.