



Bulldog

BULLETIN

MID-SUMMER 2024

Message from the Superintendent

I hope everyone is having a great summer! We have been busy this summer, especially with extensive capital project work happening at each school building. This work will improve our facilities infrastructure and our indoor and outdoor learning spaces.

We are very excited to see our staff back on August 29 and all of our students back on Wednesday, September 4. Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

—Matt Landahl

SOUTH AVENUE KIDS SHARE THEIR SUPERPOWER

Kids in the English language learners class at South Avenue are real superheroes. While they may not fly or possess superhuman strength, they have a superpower – the ability to speak two languages.



Soon to be sixth graders Bryan Flores and Fahmida Rahman, spoke Spanish and



Bengali as their first languages and learned English fluently in teacher

Kathryn Lokmaci's class. They showed their love for their native languages by creating posters called, "Bilingualism is My Superpower."

Lokmaci got the idea for the project from Jennifer Jones' book "Spanish is My Superpower" which takes an empathic approach to being bilingual where students can feel that their culture and language is valued.

She then gave Flores, Rahman and their classmates capes and took pictures in front of a world map.

"It's nice for them to value themselves because it's scary when you come to another country and you might be isolated from your culture," Lokmaci explained. "I want them to know that it is cool that they know two languages."

For Lokmaci, she hopes to have more projects

centered on students' bilingualism in the future, including a potential documentary about them and their families.

"I always like to grow the idea of being bilingual in different ways," Lokmaci said. "It is a skill to be able to speak multiple languages and switch between them."

While Rahman became more familiar with English in second grade, she still speaks Bengali as a way to keep a connection with her culture.

"My culture is a thing that I love," Rahman said. "It's a superpower being bilingual, it's a superpower that I can use a lot."

Flores was excited to work on this project and noted that speaking Spanish is important for him because he can communicate with his family who do not speak English.

"I need to speak Spanish with them," Flores said of his family. "I thought it was fun because I like to share about my language."



Beacon Students Tackle Trades this Summer

A handful of Rombout students made new friends and mastered new skills in the fields of culinary arts, electrical, fashion design and metal fabrication during Dutchess BOCES' Summer CTI Experience in mid-July.

This free yearly program takes students' interests and applies them to a project that they can be proud of, Career and Technical Institute Principal Nick Millas said.

"This opportunity for experiential learning allows them to see what it's like to be in a career and technical education program, which might be something they want to continue to pursue in the future," Millas said.



Incoming seventh grader Mikayla McMahon chose fashion

design because she loves to sew, a skill she learned from her grandmother. She was able to take home a T-shirt she designed featuring butterflies.

"I found fabrics with butterflies to cut out and include in my design," McMahon explained. "This week has been great, I get to be creative."

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Glenham Fifth-Graders Tour Rombout



Glenham fifth graders got a taste of what middle school will be like during a tour of Rombout in June.

Sixth grade teachers showed the future middle schoolers around various classrooms, important offices and the gym where they played some games before lunch at the cafeteria.

Assistant Principal Amanda Pucino noted that this longstanding tradition is important for lowering students' anxiety levels about transitioning to middle school where they meet teachers they might have in the fall. The students will participate in a second orientation in August familiarizing them with everything.

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Beacon Students Tackle Trades this Summer *cont'd...*



Fashion instructor Sebastian Yeung noted that students

learned what a fashion designer does before presenting a design to a client.

"I hope they learn what they can achieve with even just a basic knowledge of design," Yeung said.

Incoming eighth grader Jack Garrett took a chance by choosing the fashion program, but wound up finding a hobby he really enjoys.

"It's been a lot of fun," Garrett said. "We learned a lot about how professionals design their own clothes for the runway."

Glenham Fifth-Graders Tour Rombout *cont'd...*



"They've been exposed to the building multiple times to take the edge off of coming into the middle school," Pucino said. "They've seen a little bit of how it works."

Pucino noted that a panel of eighth graders sharing their wisdom with younger students is beneficial especially if the latter has questions about how the lockers work or how long it takes to get to classes.

"When they have little questions that we as adults don't think of, they have a student to student perspective," Pucino explained. "They look to the eighth graders as role models."

Panelist Max King, a former Glenham student himself, benefitted from attending the tour when he was entering sixth grade and was happy to return the favor for the next generation.

"It's nice to help kids coming into Rombout on how to get use to the bell system, A and B day schedules and the classes," King said. "It's not that hard, the jump isn't big."

Soon to be sixth grader Delanie Winther appreciated how welcoming everyone was and they helped ease her nerves, as she worried about getting lost in the building. "I'm a lot less worried for next year," Winther said. "It's going to be a great experience."



Class of 2024 Mural Celebrates Beacon Institutions

If you are new to Beacon High School, you can become familiar with all the best hangout spots by viewing a student painted mural in one of the hallways.



Mia Nelson-Clyne, now a BHS alumni, responded to an email sent to the senior class by social studies teacher Erin Haddeland about painting the mural and was chosen after submitting a design. She was given free rein on what to paint and included eateries such as Ron's Ice Cream and the Yankee Clipper

Diner, because she and her classmates frequented them after school.

"They are places that meant something to the kids in Beacon," Nelson-Clyne said. "They're just places that I have good memories from."

The mural was a passion project for Nelson-Clyne who noted that many of her fellow seniors wanted to see the work in progress and were then encouraged to sign it. "It brings us all together at the end of the year," she said. "It'll be a big send-off and I'm very happy with it."



Haddeland was impressed by Nelson-Clyne's submission and thought the mural came out beautiful.

"Each year, they feel like they have to top the ones before," Haddeland said of the student painters. "They're really exceeding expectations."

While Principal Corey Dwyer approves the design, this is a mostly student driven project which Haddeland said has brought forth positive results. "We've been very lucky that they've been amazing," Haddeland said. "It's a nice way to start wrapping up the end of the year."

Elementary Musicals are a Delight

You better believe it, these Beacon kids sure have a lot of talent. With the help of their teachers, students at Sargent and South Avenue put on musicals back in early June that made everyone's day.

Sargent

The school's production of "The Wizard of Oz" had the audiences experiencing double vision – third graders Ava Edson and Romy Steifman both played Dorothy Gale.

Sargent Drama Club adviser Kathleen Paniccia said this was done to give more students parts, but also so the young actors did not have as many lines to memorize. She praised the girls for their performances.

"Dorothy's such a big part and has

probably the most lines of the whole show, so it can be a little stressful to put that on one kid," Paniccia said.



"I'm really happy with both girls I chose, they both worked really well together."

The show was so well received that the school ran out of chairs to seat people with Paniccia noting that "The Wizard of Oz," is an enduring classic the whole family can enjoy.

"A classic is a classic for a reason," Paniccia said. "It was a blast."

Edson was thrilled to play Dorothy because she never played a lead



role before and most enjoyed performing for her relatives who have a connection with the story.

"Performing in front of my aunt and my nana who are

from Kansas made me even happier," Edson said. "I like being on the stage and saying lines."

While Steifman was a little nervous at first, she had fun playing Dorothy. She noted that confidence is a key aspect to putting on a play.

"That's what makes the play actually good," Steifman said. "If you're confident, the play will go on and you'll have a chance to finish the play and have fun."

South Avenue



Third through fifth graders performed in the musical "Leap Day" which personified the days of the week who demand an eighth day be added to the week because they feel overworked.

Representatives from the

Compass Arts Creativity Project directed and worked

with the kids to fine tune their performance, while library/media specialist Aaron Burke designed the sets.

"They did everything, I was in the background for most of it," Burke said of the organization's representatives. "I can't sing, I can't do any of that stuff."

While some students were disappointed to not get bigger roles, Burke noted that everyone who acted in the play got a speaking role. It also served as a great learning opportunity where students had to memorize lines and work as a team in order to achieve greatness.

"If you want to look for standards that it addresses you could connect it to a bunch," Burke said. "It's a powerful way to learn."

The audience gave what Burke called a "post play scream" and was happy to have discovered so much great talent.

"The energy was off the charts, they were so pumped," Burke said. "It was super exciting."



Commended Teachers Earn Tenure

Seven Beacon teachers were awarded tenure during the Board of Education's June 17 meeting where they also received accolades by their respective building principals and supervisors.

Catie Oriani, Math Teacher at Rombout

Principal Brian Soltish noted that Oriani goes above and beyond in her role as a teacher, often helping students academically and giving them advice before and after school, and as a coach of varsity girls tennis and softball.

"She's truly a dynamic and passionate teacher and cares greatly about the students," Soltish said. "It is an honor to recommend her for tenure."

Ryan Koval, Physical Education Teacher at Sargent

Koval has been involved in numerous district sports programs, including most recently serving as announcer for BHS basketball games. Athletic director John Giametta credited Koval for implementing a team based approach in his class where students serve as coaches, scorekeepers and practice coordinators.

"He's given more choice in the classroom to our students which results in better productivity and overall better experiences," Giametta said. "He's willing to put in the extra effort."

Matthew Alesi, Speech Pathologist at Glenham

Alesi is known for his collaborative approach where he involves parents, teachers and other professionals to create individual therapy plans and support systems for students. Principal Cassandra Orser praised Alesi for being a positive influence on his students' progress.

"His passion for helping children overcome communications challenges and reach their full potential is truly inspiring,"

Orser said. "This recommendation serves as a testament to his contributions and the value he brings to the Glenham school community."

Christina Alvarez-Moore, Math Teacher at BHS

Alvarez-Moore believes all students can be successful even in tough subjects like algebra and in return the students are fond of her. She also dedicates her time outside of school, including many Saturdays, to coaching BHS' e-sports team.

"Without her we probably wouldn't be able to have a team because there aren't many people that would sacrifice their Saturdays as much as she has," Principal Corey Dwyer said. "We're really grateful for that."



Dinarelys Alvarez, English Teacher at BHS

Dwyer described Alvarez as a highly effective teacher as many of her students have scored high on SAT exams. She is also active in the school community serving as a co-advisor for the class of 2024 where she and ENL teacher Nicole Piacente fundraised thousands of dollars for and planned events such as homecoming and the senior prom.

"The senior class is really grateful for everything you've done for them," Dwyer said. "We're really glad to have you."

Sharon Morales, School Counselor at BHS

Morales provides support to around 200 students as they move through high school and make post-secondary plans. Dwyer praised Morales for exceeding as co-coordinator of the guidance department, a demanding task as the department impacts nearly all areas of BHS.

"I spend more time talking to Mrs. Morales than I do just about anybody in the school," Dwyer said. "Mrs. Morales has distinguished herself as a collaborative problem solver who works well with others and remains student centered."

Patrick Schetter, Social Studies Teacher at BHS

In addition to teaching, Schetter has advised multiple BHS student organizations and has coached numerous sports including the varsity boys basketball where his efforts led the team to the Section IX championships. For Schetter, there is something equally important to his students' sportsmanship.

"He takes a lot of pride in the character for his athletes, just as much as their successes on the court," Dwyer said. "We're very grateful for the example that he sets for our students and the way he motivates them to give their best."

Alumni Panel Gives Worthy Advice



Fourteen Beacon High School alumni gathered at their alma mater for a panel discussion with outgoing seniors June 11 where they offered words of wisdom.

Social studies teacher Erin Haddeland wanted to bring panelists from different backgrounds, which included business owners and current college students. She noted that the event's purposes are to get students to think outside the box and network with older figures besides their parents and teachers.

"We become white noise after a while, but maybe someone new will hold their attention," Haddeland said.

For Haddeland, she appreciated the advice the panelists gave about embracing change and the insightful questions students asked, including expectation versus reality.

"A lot of the advice was to realize that things are not going to turn out how you think they're going to and it will be OK," Haddeland said. "It might even be better than you thought."

Alumni Reuben Simmons, City of Beacon maintenance worker and youth sports coach, participated because he faced challenges mapping out life post-high school and felt his journey from community college to finishing at a private university was worth sharing. He advised students to do anything that will lead to a career they want to pursue, whether that be attending college or trade school or working.

"My overall advice was for students to get to know themselves and not be afraid to not have all the answers right now," Simmons said. "My goal for the youth I interact with is for them to be the best version of themselves."

Simmons believes the event is crucial for students because it can open their eyes to something they were not anticipating and would love to see it offered at the start of the school year and be open to juniors too.

"One thing all of us on the panel have over the students in the audience is lived experience," Simmons explained.

"Allowing a space for them to hear stories and ask questions is very beneficial."

Students Show Their Appreciation for Teachers



Although Teacher Appreciation Week was in late spring, we want to keep the appreciation going throughout the summer by sharing the love students have for their teachers in BCSD.

South Avenue ES

Some fourth grade students could not say enough kind words about their teacher Bridgette Kenton, describing her as supportive and kind who makes learning fun.

Na'yeli Robinson appreciates Kenton's teaching style which makes her want to learn because it is more exciting. She also appreciates the reminders Kenton gives to her to get work done on time, helping her concentrate.

"She is the reason that I'm even learning right now," Robinson said of Kenton. "She does a lot of things that other teachers don't do."

Ameer Camara appreciates Kenton giving out awards to everyone who exhibits positive behavior, as well her teaching style where she answers questions he has about assignments.

"She teaches in a manner that we understand a lot better," Camara said.

Kenton appreciates the love shown by her kids, as well as from Principal Kelly

Amendola and the PTA who express their gratitude to teachers throughout the year.

"It's always great to be appreciated for the hard work that you're doing," Kenton said. "We also appreciate what the community does to help us."

Rombout MS

English teacher Kristen Simms and sixth grade teacher Jennifer LePere received sweet notes from Rombout staff, as well as current and former students.

Touched by their gesture, LePere said. "It's always nice to feel appreciated."

Simms agreed and thanked the students' parents who have showered her and LePere with gifts and notes of appreciation for making a difference in their children's lives.

"It's absolutely rewarding to hear students, especially former students, come back who appreciated having us," Simms said. "Hearing from the parents is also rewarding."

Retirees Thanked for Years of Service

Prior to the June 17 Board of Education meeting, retiring district staff were celebrated for their hard work with a certificate and positive anecdotes from their respective supervisors or building principals.

Superintendent Matt Landahl thanked the outgoing staff for their efforts before welcoming everyone to a reception held at the high school

Congratulations to everyone on your retirement, you've earned it!

Jose Alarcron, custodial worker for Facilities, 10 years of service
Marion Chrisville, fifth grade teacher at Glenham, 20 years of service
Jose Contreras, ENL teacher at Glenham, 33 years of service
Amy Dick, network specialist for the district, 29 years of service
Beverly Dross, teaching assistant at Glenham, 38 years of service
Merleine Etuk, custodial worker for Facilities, 20 years of service
Sallie Farkas, art teacher at Glenham, 24 years of service
Karen Federico, music teacher at Glenham, 15 years of service
Cynthia Gaspari, special education teacher at Glenham, eight years of service
Assunta Giordano, custodial worker at Facilities, 18 years of service
Aida Gonzalez, teaching aide at Sargent, three years of service
James Henry, math teacher at Rombout, 31 years of service
Victoria Hoerup, special education teacher at South Avenue, 36 years of service
Karla Lahey, cook manager for Food Services, 20 years of service
Denis Lahey, courier for Facilities, eight years of service
Lisa Moseman, teacher aide at South Avenue, 20 years of service
Kim Logan-Stivale, office systems specialist for the district, 26 years of service
Cathy McGann, AIS reading teacher at Sargent, 19 years of service
Cathy Pezzo, art teacher at Forrestal and Sargent, 28 years of service
Amy Powlis, custodial worker for Facilities, 20 years of service
Barbara Renari, teacher aide at South Avenue, six years of service
Robert Simmonds, school security monitor at BHS, six years of service
Susan Wurtz, art teacher at Sargent and South Avenue, 34 years of service