



Hello Millbrook Families!

As the close of 2020 nears, I wanted to take this opportunity to wish our Millbrook community and everyone in it a wonderfully happy holiday season - a holiday season that's filled with hearty laughs, delicious food, and time with family and friends. These past 10 months have been tremendously difficult for all of us in so many ways. I hope you are able to find time to rest, regroup, and rejuvenate - you most definitely deserve it. We will continue to face many challenges in the New Year, but as I have learned rather quickly (pandemic, water main break, snowstorm, outages, etc!!) this community is strong - #MillbrookStrong and whatever comes our way we will figure it out - together. Here's to a lighter and brighter 2021.

Stay well. Stay in touch. Laura, Your Proud Superintendent of Schools

Food Service Working Hard Feeding All

The Millbrook Central School District's Food Service team has worked diligently since March to ensure students received meals while school was out during the COVID-19 pandemic and continue to do so with the hybrid and remote learning models implemented this school year.

"The staff began working on this task on March 16 and continued to provide access to meals throughout the summer and through the school year utilizing the New York State Education Department Child Nutrition Programs," School Lunch Manager Holly Peters-Heady noted.



Food Services provides meals to all students for free, regardless of whether they are learning in-person or remotely, and they do not have to meet any specific criteria this year.

"The District has met the assurances set forth by the State of NY which requires meals to be served to all students attending school," Peters-Heady said. "USDA provided an extension on the funding for all children 18 and under to participate."

"School nutrition programs must meet federal requirements when breakfast and lunch meals are prepared," Peters-Heady explained.

"Millbrook Central School District ensures that each meal packed for delivery to the classroom or child's home meets or exceeds those requirements," Peters-Heady said.

A typical breakfast meal meeting the requirements may include mini whole grain fruit pancakes, fruit and juice or

1% or skim milk, while a lunch may consist of a cheeseburger, cucumber slices, fruit and either chocolate, 1% or skim milk.

"Healthy, nutritious meals are always provided," Peters-Heady said. "Flexibility and appropriate substitutions are imperative in maintaining the nutritional integrity of meals."



The pandemic changed the preparation of meals and Peters-Heady found it difficult during the late spring and summer to obtain products due to processing plants closing, among other matters.



were added to ensure the safety of the school community.

Peters-Heady and her team, donning masks, prepare food in a large area where social distancing is practiced, and all items are washed, packaged, and prepared with limited contact. The meals are then packed and delivered in coolers to families with cooking instructions.

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Communication with Students is Key



Kimberly McKeon is the new Speech-Language Pathologist for both Elm Drive Elementary and Millbrook High School. She wants to create an open, comfortable and fun environment for her students, while providing the best

support services she can. She joined the District in September.

McKeon's duties are to provide speech-language services to students with communication disorders that involve language, articulation, fluency, and voice. She focuses in areas such as prevention, assessment, and interventions and aims to educate, and advocate for her students.

Continuing to expand her education and experiences is one of McKeon's goals for the school year. While the COVID-19 pandemic has brought many challenges, it taught McKeon the importance of open communication and collaboration among students, their families, and the staff, as well as remaining flexible and engaging with the students in creative ways.

"Collaboration and communication with colleagues and families is key to our students' success as well as really listening to what students have to say," McKeon said.

"Starting any new job has its challenges however doing so in the middle of a pandemic brings on its own type of challenges," she said.

McKeon holds a Master's degree in Speech-Language Disabilities and a Bachelor's degree in Communication Disorders and Sciences, both from SUNY New Paltz. She completed her student teaching at Millbrook while earning her Master's degree and enjoyed the friendly atmosphere, making it an easy choice for her to come back and work full-time.

"I really enjoyed the sense of community and tight knit relationships among staff, students, parents, and community," McKeon said.

Food Service

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Dawn Wacker Tompkins ▶
Millbrook Moms
12h · 📷

♥ Thank You MCSD Food Staff 🍴🥤 and First Student Bus 🚌 for being there everyday and getting these meals out daily. It is a huge job as you can see.... This is what prepping 1108 meals to go out looks like. These are the meals for only this Saturday & Sunday!!!! Each one of those bags is per child and contains 4 meals for the weekend. ♥ #millbrookstrong

"Remote meal delivery is definitely new to the circumstances of the pandemic," Peters-Heady said.

Peters-Heady and her team prepare two meals for about 330 children daily and during the upcoming winter recess they will be preparing almost 6,100 meals.



"The number varies by Cohort days and weekend and holiday schedules," she said. "Food service will continue to provide meals to all children of the Millbrook Community for as long as there is flexibility and guidance from USDA, the State of New York and a need in our community."

The school community is singing the Food Services team's praises for all of their efforts.

Parent Jessica Dickinson and her children are grateful for the meals and thanks everyone involved.



Jessica Dickinson
My kids and I are so grateful for this. It's an amazing feat to conquer and it warms my heart with each delivery. THANK YOU TO ALL INVOLVED 🙌

PTO Looks to Increase Fundraising Efforts



Millbrook Central School District's Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), has seen a decline in contributions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but its leaders remain committed to fundraising for programs that enrich students' education

"Most parents aren't aware that the PTO is a registered 501c3 charity organization operating independently from the school district," PTO Recording Secretary Jennifer Manzi said. Some of its efforts include Scholastic Book Fairs, a Gertrude Hawk Chocolate spring fundraiser and providing a yearly scholarship to a senior who made an impact in their community.

"We help each building celebrate the students," Manzi said. "We also provide need-based financial support to students for school field trips or programs which then allows every student the opportunity to participate."

"Since the pandemic struck in March 2020, the PTO's fundraising dollars severely declined and it's more difficult to recruit new members since open houses and orientations are not occurring," Manzi said.

"Our membership enrollment is down significantly and we have had to move all of our fundraising to online platforms," she said. "This has provided an exceptional challenge because we know we are not reaching every household with students," Manzi shared.

"In previous years, PTO members were in each school building establishing a presence with parents and students, but since many students are not in-person for the whole week, the organization cannot provide the programs and celebratory support they normally do," Manzi said.

"Now that we cannot enter the buildings, it has become harder to 'get the word out' about everything," Manzi said.

The organization now hosts virtual meetings and Manzi hopes they will continue to be livestreamed even when everything resumes to being in-person. Members are also in the early stages of creating an email list or newsletter in conjunction with the District to provide information to families.

"Once the pandemic ends enough to allow full time school for all students, we anticipate bouncing back to 'normal' with participation and fundraising," she said.

Manzi joined the PTO during the 2016-2017 school year because the organization, unlike other school PTA groups, raises money for a specific purpose – to provide enrichment to students.

"When my children came to Millbrook, they had already been at another school whose PTA did not have a targeted mission," she said. "The contrast between the two groups made the Millbrook PTO stand out."

Manzi praised this year's members for their dedication to the mission and they have brainstormed ways to increase fundraising. "I fully understand this will take some time, but I believe it will happen," Manzi said. "I want the Millbrook PTO to be known for what we give back, rather than what we fundraise."



**VIRTUAL
PUBLIC MEETING OF
MILLBROOK'S
PARENT TEACHER
ORGANIZATION**

Be sure to attend the next virtual public meeting of Millbrook's Parent Teacher Organization on February 1, 2021 starting at 7 pm Information on connecting on Zoom will be available at a later date.

Be sure to join the MSCD PTO – In the Know... with the PTO Facebook group for the most up-to-date information on events, fundraisers and other exciting school news. Help support the PTO and show off your school pride by ordering Millbrook Blazer Spiritwear & Accessories. They make great holiday gifts! **Place your order at: <https://apparelnow.com/millbrook-ptto-apparel/accessories>**

