



## Happy Thanksgiving

Because of each and every one of you Millbrook Central School District has remained **#MillbrookStrong** throughout these difficult times. Thank you for your good energy, ongoing support, flexibility, trust, perseverance, and great care for all of our children.

We are so much stronger - together!! I hope this Thanksgiving brings you joy and time for yourself and others. See you in-person and/or virtually on November 30!!

Stay well. Laura, Your Proud Superintendent of Schools

### Students Happy to Be Back at Millbrook High

Millbrook began its hybrid learning model, which combines in-person and remote education, on November 2. Students at the high school have adapted to changes due to COVID-19 and are happy to be back for in-person classes for at least part of each week.



For sophomore Kiera O'Hearn, the hybrid model has been a smooth transition from full remote classes and she is excited to socialize with her fellow classmates, even if it is more quiet than usual.

"The workload has been pretty consistent and easy," O'Hearn said. "It's better than sitting at home."

When Millbrook first enacted full remote learning in the spring, freshman Steven Palomba, was frustrated not being in school and is happy to be back for two days a week.

"It's getting better now that we're coming in," Palomba said. "It's nice after 10 months of being stuck at home to finally get out of the house."

Palomba is hopeful the school will be able to go back to full in-person classes before the school year is over. "It's kind of a hope," he said.



"This breaks it up a little bit."

Junior Madeline Marchant was initially scared about coming back to classes, but found it better to learn in-person with her teacher. She is taking every precaution to stay safe.

"It wasn't as bad as I thought, but it's still very, very different," Marchant said. "As long as I'm taking precautions and I'm doing what I'm supposed to do, then I should be fine."

Marchant has struggled socially sometimes and worried about feeling



isolated, but she soon realized she is not alone.

"I was just afraid of being secluded just to myself, but everybody else kind of is," she said.

"Everybody else is going through it too."

Despite school having a different feeling than previous school years, Josh Keddy, a sophomore, is happy to see his friends again and have in-person classes. He finds there are fewer distractions.

"It's pretty fun seeing everyone," Keddy said. "I get distracted more easily online." Keddy hopes to be able to play basketball and football again during the year. "I plan on playing for the team if we have sports this year," he said.



Hudson Heitmann, a sophomore, likes the hybrid model.

"School just gets stressful five days a week when you do the same thing," Heitmann said.

### Former Millbrook Teacher Returns as Principal

Michael Setaro, a former 7<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at the Millbrook Middle School, is now back in the District as the Principal for Elm Drive Elementary during one of the most intense times in educational history.

Setaro began his new role in mid-August after working as an assistant principal at Vail Farm Elementary School in LaGrange. He came back to the District after six years of being away because of his familiarity with the school environment.

"When I saw that this building was open for a principal, I was eager to come," Setaro said.

In addition to his administrative roles, Setaro also worked at the Kildonan School in Amenia as a high school teacher for dyslexic students. Once he moved into the administration world, he started gearing his work toward literacy and special education. "Some students may need to be taught differently than others even if they are in the same grade," he said.

"We are given the curriculum that we teach, but at the same time, the way students learn it and where they are in their depth of knowledge and their ability to access it is different," Setaro said. "We're small enough that we can offer all those different levels and that will set us apart from the other districts."

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In his role, Setaro remains committed to special education and Response to Intervention Services. He also oversees multi-tiered student services for the entire District to help both struggling and higher achieving students.

“My work here is to really look at our current system and then bring in all the different key players into the conversation and create a very thorough process where we don’t miss anybody,” he said.

Setaro holds a degree in Educational Leadership from the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts in addition to holding a Master’s in European history from Western Connecticut State University. He pursued an educational career because he loved working with kids as a baseball coach. Setaro is New York State certified as a social studies teacher and building administrator.

Starting a new job during the COVID-19 pandemic can present challenges, but Setaro has found positives such as more open communication not typically seen during a school year.

“I feel like I’ve been working with this staff here for a year so far and I’ve only been here for three months,” Setaro said. “We’re going to be able to do a lot of good stuff in the future because we already have that experience and attitude of ‘Let’s try a few new things out and see what works best.’”

## Elm Drive Students Learn the Essentials

Students at the Elm Drive Elementary School were busy bees last week learning how to read and write. Their teachers were on hand to assist, as needed. The young students focused hard on their assignments across the building.

Students in Miss Alejandra Godoy’s 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class wrote descriptions of the book they were reading about animals on yellow Post-It notes.



Mr. Christopher Proppe’s kindergarten class started a reading lesson. One student chose to read through the very colorful “Clowns with Balloons” by Bruce Larkin.

First graders in Mrs. Karen Tegeler’s class used markers to write out words they were learning on mini whiteboards. They started writing out the name “Jack,” while Tegeler spelled it along with them.

