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# MIDLAKES JOURNAL

PHELPS-CLIFTON SPRINGS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



VOLUME **XXV**, ISSUE **III**  
JANUARY 2020

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## FIND MORE AT MIDLAKES.ORG



**PHOTOS:** Director Keith Childs and Midlakes Theatre Experience prepare for March performances of "Elf." For more information, go online and turn to **PAGE 6.**



**VIDEO:** The Midlakes boys swim team continues to make waves with strong showings in the pool.



## READING CURRICULUM SPELLS EXCITEMENT

Parked comfortably in a cozy chair inside Leslie O’Hora’s second-grade classroom, Sophia Sharp quietly reads a book that asks her to match such words as mouth, legs, tail, and nose to photos of different animals.

She quickly matches the words and continues on as O’Hora works on vocabulary words with two other students in the room.

Teachers throughout Midlakes Elementary School are doing similar exercises with students as the District implements a new K-5 English Language Arts curriculum from the American Reading Company to prepare for changes in statewide standards and new

assessments administered in the spring of 2021.

The curriculum at Midlakes is designed to get students excited about reading while meeting their individualized needs and growing their English Language Arts skills across grade levels.

The Elementary School held a Family Literacy Night in December to inform parents of the changes and show how they can best support their young readers at home. The school is also working to ensure that the new

**SEE ELA, PAGE 2**

## DISTRICT AWARDED \$375K UPK GRANT

The Phelps-Clifton Springs Central School District expects to nearly double its Universal Pre-Kindergarten program with approximately \$375,000 in funds awarded through a competitive state grant.

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo informed the District of the grant as part of an initiative to support Pre-Kindergarten programs throughout the state. The Phelps-Clifton Springs

Central School District was among only 26 districts in the state to receive the grant.

The \$375,251 grant will allow the District to provide full- and half-day pre-kindergarten opportunities to as many as 90 four-year-olds.

The District will share more details regarding the expanded UPK program as they become available.

## ELA FROM PAGE 1

curriculum can meet the varying needs of students and families with materials produced in braille and multiple languages.

"There is an abundant amount of research showing how important reading is to a student's future success," said Michelle Robinette, Director of Curriculum and Instruction of the Phelps-Clifton Springs Central School. "The more they read, the more successful they will become."

Each student's proficiency level was determined earlier in the year by their teacher, who assigned a reading level – designated by a color and number. Books are placed in bins mirroring those levels, with new books rotated into the bins every few weeks.

Dedicated classroom time – sometimes as much as 45 minutes – is set aside for group and individual readings, small group discussions, and one-on-one conferences to help students reach their next reading level. Students also have cards with strategies to help them figure out unknown words.

Teachers are discovering that students are excited and have been sharing what they're learning from the books.

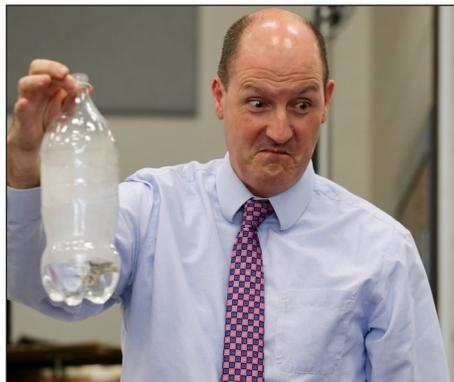
"They are just into their books," said Ali Estes, a third-grade teacher. "They just want to keep reading and go on the adventures that are in their books."

For example, third graders have been uncovering various facts while reading about weather patterns. Their research was used to write about what they discovered.

Also, WHAM-TV (Channel 13) meteorologist Mark McLean visited with students to answer questions and share interesting weather-related information.



**Above, children's author Bruce Coville meets with students and staff at Midlakes Elementary School to share how he develops his stories. Left, meteorologist Mark McLean speaks to the students about the weather and how clouds are formed.**



Fifth graders kicked off their school year by reading Bruce Coville's book "My Teacher is an Alien" about a group of students who discover that their teacher is actually an orange-eyed alien. The author from Syracuse met with students to answer questions and share how he develops his stories.

O'Hora's second-graders have been learning all about bugs.

She started a lesson by reading a

message with students on how they were going to determine the main topic, and key ideas from a text to write a paragraph. The students read the lesson aloud as O'Hora pointed to several words displayed on a smart TV.

"It is really cohesive and just makes sense," O'Hora said about how the reading and writing exercises work together. "The kids are reading. They love talking about their books."

## HOW FAMILIES CAN SUPPORT READING AND LEARNING AT HOME

Families can support literacy skills at home in several ways, including:

- Remove distractions and find a comfortable place to make reading a pleasurable habit.
- Take students to a local

library to find books (and topics) of interest, especially during breaks from school.

- Read to or with your child. Take turns reading.
- Model and encourage reading for information and for

pleasure at home. Remember, reading occurs in magazines, cookbooks, newspapers and even comic books.

- Play Scrabble, Boggle, Blurt, Scattegories or a similar game to practice literacy skills.

*Reading strategies provided by Michelle Robinette, Director of Curriculum and Instruction.*

## SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR STUDENT

- What will happen next?
- What details from the reading support your rationale?
- How would you rewrite the ending and why?
- Is there a character you can relate to and why?

**A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT**



# DISTRICT BEGINS STRATEGIC PLANNING

*A community forum is set for February 11 in the High School.*

BY MATTHEW SICKLES | MSICKLES@MIDLAKES.ORG

Over the past two years, the Midlakes Board of Education, administration, and staff have been focused on the concept of alignment. Ensuring that every Midlakes student has access to the best possible opportunities and outcomes requires everyone working together and pulling in the same direction. It also requires a clear understanding of where we are and where we want to go.

As we adapt to the changing needs of our students and the evolving expectations related to college and career readiness, it is important to review our progress, our opportunities, and the desired outcomes for our students.

On February 10, Midlakes will begin a strategic planning process that will clarify the values and beliefs of the District and establish the goals that will guide our work for the next 3-5 years.

The District is committed to working with all stakeholder groups to gather feedback on our successes, our areas for improvement, and the priorities that will enable us to support the social, emotional, and academic needs of our students to create the appropriate opportunities for success. This feedback is essential to identifying the needs and goals that should serve as focal points of our work

for the next several years.

The District will be assisted in this work by a team of consultants from the Warner School of Education (University of Rochester). The Warner School was selected through a competitive application process. Its team brings a wealth of experience in working with school districts to analyze and evaluate current performance, investigate opportunities for improvement, and develop strategic plans that serve as practical and effective tools for advancing student outcomes.

On February 10, the team of consultants will be on campus all day to meet and gather feedback from students, teachers, support staff, and administrators. The consultants will also meet with the Board of Education, just prior to the February 10 Board meeting, to gather its insights on the successes and goals of the district.

The team will return for a 6:30 p.m. forum on Tuesday, Feb. 11 in the High School (rooms 118, 119 and 120) open to parents and community members. For those who are unable to attend the community forum, a survey will be posted on the school website during the month of March.

Once all the data and feedback have been collected, a Strategic Planning Council will meet regularly from March through May to evaluate the information, discuss the values, beliefs, and goals of the District, and develop a Strategic Plan for final consideration by the Board of Education. The Strategic Planning Council will be made up of approximately 25 members representing students, parents, teachers, support staff, administration, and the Board of Education.

The District is excited to develop a plan that includes the many perspectives of this inclusive Planning Council. The strategic plan will be finalized and presented to the Board of Education by June 15.

The strategic planning process will enable the District to align our programs, policies, and budgets to a clear set of goals that reflect a common understanding of what our students need to thrive. Strategic planning represents an important step in advancing the work of the District and the success of our students.

We welcome and encourage all members of the Midlakes community to participate by attending focus groups and/or completing the online survey. We need and value your input!

## SUPPORT THE CLASS OF 2020

Support the Senior Class Chem Free Party with a tax deductible donation of \$20.20 (or more). Send your contribution with name, address and payment to:

**STEPHANIE BUISCH, CHAIRPERSON**  
**MIDLAKES CHEM FREE PARTY**  
**6 EXCHANGE ST., PHELPS, NY 14532**

*\*\*Include a self-addressed stamped envelope, if requesting a receipt.\*\**



# SECTIONAL CHAMPS!



The Midlakes boys volleyball team swept Pavilion/York in straight sets to win the Section V Class B2 title at Webster Schroeder High School.

won two girls titles at Midlakes.

Seniors Josh Delgado and Sam Day each had 13 kills and were named to the All-Tournament Team. Junior Isaiah Delgado finished with 32 assists and was named tournament MVP.

It was the school's 12th Section V boys volleyball title and eighth boys title under head coach Kyle Salisbury, who has also



## DISTRICT NOTES

### STUDENTS SELECTED TO AREA ALL-STATE

Two Midlakes students were recognized by the New York State School Music Association for outstanding solo performances and were invited to perform with other top regional musicians in select concerts earlier in the school year.

Matt Cannan, a seventh-grader, performed with the Junior High Area All-State Band Festival held on Nov. 1 and 2 at the Greece Athena Performing Arts Center. Senior Abby Sloane, a percussionist, was invited to perform with the Senior High Area All-State Concert Band on Nov. 15 and 16 at Letchworth High School.



**CANNAN**

### ART STUDENTS HELP FIGHT HUNGER

Midlakes art students created 30 ceramic bowls and several watercolor paintings to donate to the Catholic Family Center's for the Empty Bowls fundraiser to help end hunger in the Rochester region.

Students in Shannon Gage's art class were joined by potters from across western New York for the fundraiser in helping to donate approximately 900 soup bowls. It was the first time high school students from any school took part in the event.

### MUELLER RECEIVES SUPERINTENDENT AWARD

Midlakes High School student Molly Mueller was recognized during the inaugural Wayne-Finger Lakes Superintendent Award Program held in November at the Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES conference center in Newark.

The program was developed to provide recognition to standout students from across the Wayne-Finger Lakes region and was made possible through the generous support of Campus Construction Management, Ferrara Fiorenza.

### STATE NAMES SCHOLAR-ATHLETE TEAMS

Several fall sports programs and nearly 50 student-athletes were recognized by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association for outstanding academic achievement.

The girls cross country (94.21 GPA), girls soccer (92.12), girls swimming and diving team (94.21), girls tennis (90.81) and the girls volleyball team (92.52) were all declared a Scholar-Athlete Team for the fall of 2019.

To receive Scholar-Athlete team recognition, the team's GPA

for at least 75 percent of its roster must be greater or equal to 90 percent. Student-athletes needed to earn at least a 90 GPA for recognition.

### WHITCOMB RETURNS TO COACH

Dave Whitcomb, who once served as principal of Midlakes High School and held roles as Director of Athletics and head varsity football coach, has been appointed by the Board of Education as head varsity football coach.

Whitcomb is currently second in wins in Section 5 football history with 217. He has been recognized several times in several leagues as Coach of the Year, including a 2005 selection as All-Greater Rochester Coach of the Year.

### STUDENT STARS IN KINDNESS ASSEMBLIES

Sixth-grader Romeo Castellano was the star of two assemblies on kindness at Midlakes Elementary School. The assemblies reminded students that being kind is about rising above expectations by being polite, smiling, including others, taking turns, giving a helping hand and a compliment, taking responsibility and treating others the way you want to be treated.

Romeo took center stage by singing "Count on Me" by Bruno Mars. He was joined by students and staff.



**CASTELLANO**

### UNIFIED BOWLING PROGRAM BEGINS

The Athletics Department launched a Unified Bowling program in November to expand opportunities and create meaningful relationships for students of all abilities.

Athletic Director John Lombardi started the program, in partnership with Special Olympics, after several families showed interest. The season ended at Roseland Bowl in Canandaigua, where each team was recognized and every participant from Midlakes received a medal.

### DISTRICT CERTIFIED IN DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

The Phelps-Clifton Springs Central School has again been certified by Common Sense Education for training Midlakes students and staff in digital citizenship.

The curriculum is designed to teach educators and students how to navigate the online world to identify and avoid cyberbullying, copyright and plagiarism issues, and much more.

## NOTICE OF PESTICIDE-TREATED AREAS

The Phelps-Clifton Springs Central School District is required by law to maintain a list of staff and parents/guardians who wish to receive forty-eight (48) hour prior written notification of pesticide applications at school facilities.

The following is a summary of treated areas:

- North Varsity and Junior Varsity Soccer Fields on Sept. 29, 2019 with End Run Broadleaf Weed Control (EPA# 2217-656-5905)
- North Varsity, Junior Varsity Soccer Fields and Football Fields on Oct. 26, 2019 with Lesco Lockup Extra 2 with Fertilizer and weed control (EPA# 62719-590-10404).

Certain pesticide applications are not subject to prior notification requirements.

For more information, contact the District Clerk at (315) 548-6420, or mail the clerk your name, address, daytime phone, evening phone and email address to District Clerk, 1490 State Route 488, Clifton Springs, NY 14432.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**



**LAURA CIRONE**  
MEMBER

For more information on the Phelps-Clifton Springs Central Board of Education, including meeting times and agendas, contact District Clerk Sarah Butler at (315) 548-6420, or visit the Board of Education online at [Midlakes.org](http://Midlakes.org).

**RYAN DAVIS**  
PRESIDENT

**AMBER WILKES**  
VICE PRESIDENT

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BOARD MEMBER

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BOARD MEMBER

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BOARD MEMBER

**TODD FREELOVE**  
BOARD MEMBER

**SHERI SCHERBYN**  
BOARD MEMBER

# BOARD APPRECIATES COMMUNITY SUPPORT ON CAPITAL PROJECT

The Phelps-Clifton Springs Board of Education would like to thank the Midlakes community for your overwhelming support of the proposed \$15.6 million capital project on December 11.

The voters' approval of the capital project, by a vote of 307-72, will help ensure that our students and teachers learn and work in a safe environment that supports their needs and promotes success for years to come.

As a result of your support, the District will be able to take care of our facilities, improve operations, and maximize student opportunities.

The Board was humbled by the participation of the many staff, parents, and community members who attended public meetings and participated in focus groups leading up to the vote. The input of these volunteers helped us plan a project that meets our most critical needs with no additional tax impact. We understand and appreciate that being fiscally responsible is important to our taxpayers.

The District is excited to begin working with Edge Architecture to coordinate the detailed design work on the project. The final design will be reviewed by the New York State Department of Education before the work is sent out to bid.

Construction is expected to begin during the spring or summer of 2022. We will provide updates as they become available.

*"As a result of your support, the District will be able to take care of our facilities, improve operations, and maximize student opportunities."*

**LAURA CIRONE,**  
BOARD MEMBER

The overwhelming support for this capital project is just one more reason we are so proud to serve a community that is dedicated to its children and its school.

Like you, we love being members of this community and we will continue to work hard to ensure that our students have access to the facilities, education, and opportunities they deserve.

On behalf of all of our students, staff, administrators, and the Board of Education, thank you once again for your overwhelming show of support.

*Laura Cirone is a member of the Phelps-Clifton Springs Board of Education.*

## COMMUNITY SWIM LESSONS OFFERED AT AQUATICS CENTER

The Midlakes Aquatic Center offers multiple opportunities for open swim, lap swim, and water aerobics to those in the community.

- Lap swim hours are 6 - 7:30 a.m., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; 7:30 - 8:30 p.m., Monday, Tuesday and Thursday; and 8 - 9 p.m., Wednesday and Friday.
- Open swim is from 6 - 8 p.m.,

Wednesday and Friday.

- Water aerobics classes are 7:30 - 8:30 a.m., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

The pool is also available for birthday parties and other group events from noon to 4 p.m. on Saturdays. The fee is \$45 per hour for the pool; \$25 per hour for the room.

Registration for spring swim lessons

begins at 10 a.m. Saturday, March 28, at the Aquatics Center. Tentative lesson dates are at 10 a.m. April 18 and 25 and May 2, 9 and 16. Half-hour and one-hour lessons are available. The schedule is subject to change.

For more information on pool operations, call Jack Hauber at (315) 548-6451, email [jhauber@midlakes.org](mailto:jhauber@midlakes.org), or visit [Midlakes.org/AquaticsCenter](http://Midlakes.org/AquaticsCenter).



## **THEATRE UNWRAPS A HUMAN-SIZED 'ELF'**

Midlakes Theatre Experience is bringing some extra Yuletide cheer to the stage with its production of *Elf: The Musical*.

The musical is based on the popular 2003 movie about Buddy (Will Ferrell), who crawls in Santa's bag as a toddler and is mistakenly whisked away to the North Pole where he is raised by Santa's elves until he realizes that he isn't an oversized elf but is actually a human.

The discovery sends buddy on a journey to New York City to uncover his true identity and locate his father, Walter Hobbs, who doesn't believe in Santa Claus, and spread Christmas cheer in the big city.

The movie was adapted for stage by Bob Martin and Thomas Meehan. The musical made its way to Broadway for several holiday shows and toured nationally in 2012 and 2014.

Midlakes sophomore Aidan Conover (pictured) stars as Buddy. The cast also

features Erik Dillon (Walter Hobbs), Shea Carr (Emily Hobbs), Merrick Van Meter (Jovie), Gavin Ruggles (Michael Hobbs), Hannah de Almeida Lage (Deb), Coby Reals (Manager), Zachary Edgemon (Mr. Greenway), and more than 35 students as well as several backstage members and volunteers.

Performances have been scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on March 13, 14 and 20, and at 2 p.m. on March 15 and 21 in the Midlakes Auditorium.

Presale tickets will be available in Mid-February and will cost \$8 (adults) and \$7 (students and senior citizens) in the Midlakes High School Office, Phelps Hometown Pharmacy, Sandy's Floral Gallery in Clifton Springs, and Renaissance — The Goodie II Shoppe in Canandaigua, Deb's Crafts and Things in Newark and the Stomping Grounds in Geneva. Tickets cost an additional \$2 at the door. For more information, visit [Midlakes.org](http://Midlakes.org).

## **VOLLEYBALL CAMP DURING FEBRUARY RECESS**

School-aged volleyball players of all skills are invited to a camp from Monday, Feb. 17 to Wednesday, Feb. 19 in the Midlakes High School gymnasium.

The camp will begin at 1:30 p.m. each day and is open to first-graders on up to varsity-level. The cost

is \$25. Discounts are available for children of the same family.

Families can register by completing the online form at [midlakes.org/volleyball](http://midlakes.org/volleyball).

For more information or questions, email Kyle Salisbury at [ksalisbury@midlakes.org](mailto:ksalisbury@midlakes.org).

## **CALENDAR: AT A GLANCE**

**Kindergarten Pre-Registration**  
(Begins online) Monday, Feb. 2

**Board of Education Meeting**  
Monday, Feb. 10

**Public Strategic Planning Forum**  
Tuesday, Feb. 11

**February Recess**  
Friday, Feb. 14 - Friday, Feb. 21

**Youth Volleyball Camp**  
Monday, Feb. 17 - Wednesday, Feb. 19

**Spring Gemini Registration**  
Wednesday, Feb. 26

**Rotary Roller Skating Party**  
Tuesday, March 3 - Thursday, March 5

**Spring JV & Varsity Sports Begin**  
Monday, March 9

**Superintendent's Conference Day**  
(No school)  
Friday, March 13

**Theatre Experience Spring Musical**  
Friday, March 13 - Sunday, March 15  
Friday, March 20 and Saturday, March 21

**Board of Education meeting**  
Monday, March 16

**Kindergarten Registration**  
Wednesday, March 18 - Friday, March 20

**Parent-Teacher Conferences**  
(K-6 dismisses at 11:45 a.m.)  
Wednesday, March 18 - Friday, March 20

**College Search Night**  
Thursday, March 26

**Swim Registration**  
Saturday, March 28

**Secondary Band & Chorus Concert**  
Tuesday, March 31

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*For more events, recent updates, the cycle day calendar and more, visit [Midlakes.org](http://Midlakes.org) and search for calendar under the "Community" tab. Dates are subject to change.*

# PRE-REGISTER NOW FOR KINDERGARTEN

Parent registration for kindergartners turning five years old by Dec. 1, 2020, will be held on March 18-20.

Children turning six years old by Dec. 1, 2020 must receive instruction on the first day of school in September, 2020. Those turning six years old after Dec. 1, 2020 must receive full-time instruction in September 2021.

Families should fill out the following form (or find the kindergarten pre-registration form under the "Schools" tab at Midlakes.org) to receive more information on the registration and screening process.

## Pre-Registration Form

Clip out and return the following information as soon as possible to Laurie Schmitt, Midlakes Elementary Pupil Support Office, 1510 Route 488, Clifton Springs, NY 14432.

### My child will (check one):

- Attend Midlakes Elementary School       Have home schooling  
 Attend a private/parochial school       Not start this year

### Family Information

Student: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State & Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Language: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mother's Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Father's Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

PHELPS-CLIFTON SPRINGS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Send tips and suggestions to: Newsletter, 1490 State Route 488, Clifton Springs, NY 14432



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