



# HALDANE HORIZONS

*A newsletter of the Haldane Central School District*



## ***Message from Dr. Benante***

Dear Haldane Community,

The beginning of the school year brings renewed excitement and energy for our school community. We had several colleagues retire at the end of last school year and several new positions in this year's budget, resulting in a number of new faces at Haldane!

This issues contains an overview of many new staff, and some great photos from our first month on campus - including some remarkable student, staff, and school recognitions!

Go Blue Devils!  
Phil Benante, Ed. D.  
Superintendent of Schools

## **SEPTEMBER 2023**

**New Faces, New Roles**

**Celebrating 25 Years!**

**2023 National Blue Ribbon School**

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**Haldane District Goals**

**Blue Devils Back on Campus**

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**News Around Campus**

## *New Faces, New Roles*



**TOM CUNNINGHAM**

**ATHLETIC DIRECTOR  
AND DEAN OF STUDENTS**



**ADAM MACNEIL**

**DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES  
AND TRANSPORTATION**



**RACHEL GORDON**

**K-2 SPECIAL EDUCATION**



**KAYLEIGH BYRD**

**1ST GRADE TEACHER,  
LEAVE REPLACEMENT**



**CHRISTINA STAFFU**

**2ND GRADE TEACHER**



**OLIVIA ASTROLOGO**

**5TH GRADE ICT TEACHER**



**KATIE DIESING**

**7TH GRADE MATH TEACHER**



**CHRIS BLAIR**

**MIDDLE SCHOOL ELA TEACHER**



**BRIAN DOUGLAS**

**7TH GRADE SCIENCE TEACHER**



## *New Faces, New Roles*



**MACKENZIE GOODE**

**WORLD LANGUAGE TEACHER  
SPANISH**



**CORDELIA NOWAK**

**WORLD LANGUAGE TEACHER  
FRENCH**



**NONZAMO REID**

**SECONDARY SPECIAL EDUCATION  
TEACHER**



**ALISON BOOTH**

**SECONDARY ART TEACHER**



**LEAH ALPER**

**HIGH SCHOOL  
CHEMISTRY TEACHER**



**ANALISA ASTE**

**SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST**



**TERESA HARDEN**

**SPEECH LANGUAGE  
PATHOLOGIST**



**KRISTEN AMATO**

**GUIDANCE COUNSELOR  
GRADES 6-9**



**ANDREA CORLESS**

**TEACHER AIDE, ELEMENTARY  
SPECIAL EDUCATION**

## *New Faces, New Roles*



**JENNIFER GILLES**

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**TEACHER AIDE, ELEMENTARY  
SPECIAL EDUCATION**



**ARRIANA ANNICCHIARICO**

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**TEACHER AIDE,  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**



**GABRIELLA WOLLESEN**

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**TEACHER AIDE,  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**



**JASON AGUILAR**

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**TEACHER AIDE,  
MIDDLE SCHOOL**



## Celebrating 25 Years!

There's no place like home...this summer three of Haldane's finest marked the completion of 25 years of service to their home away from home, the Haldane Central School District. Haldane's students and families, faculty and staff, and the Philipstown community are all made stronger by the dedication of teachers and administrators. While welcoming new staff is vital to the growth of our district, it is the lifelong commitments of so many others that brings such support and success to students and the district as a whole. ***Thank you to High School Principal Julia Sniffen, High School Science Teacher Mark Patinella, and Third Grade Teacher Beth Satterlee!***



## 2023 National Blue Ribbon School

Haldane High School was named a 2023 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. The recognition as an Exemplary High-Performing Schools is based on overall academic achievement, including student scores and graduation rates, as well as innovative school practices. According to the Department, "The coveted National Blue Ribbon School award affirms the hard work of students, educators, families, and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging and engaging content."

The honor comes following an extensive application process of the combined efforts of High School Principal Julia Sniffen and the high school department chairs.

Principal Sniffen, Superintendent Dr. Phil Benante, and high school English teacher Nancy Martinez-Cirelli will attend the Blue Ribbon Ceremony in Washington, DC this November.



[U.S. Department of Education  
Press Release](#)

[Haldane High School  
Recognition](#)

## HALDANE BOARD OF EDUCATION GOALS

2023-2024

- 1 Collaborate with the Superintendent to finalize the **Campus Master Plan** draft, finalize the components of Project 1, and determine if and when Project 1 should be presented to the community for vote, with special attention throughout to community engagement and education.
- 2 Monitor the work of the **Pupil Personnel Services** department as it develops long-term plans for program improvements and engages in near-term actions.
- 3 Develop new processes and practices for **building visitation** with the goal of developing opportunities for observing educational programs and connecting with district staff.
- 4 Create and adopt a new **board member orientation manual** and related processes to facilitate information transfer, promote consistency, and maintain a highly effective body.

## HALDANE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT GOALS

2023-2024

- 1 Convene the **Strategic Coherence Plan** Core Planning Team to review the first iteration of the Strategic Coherence Plan and develop the next series of strategies and action steps.
- 2 Finalize the **Campus Master Plan** draft and finalize the components of Project 1. Collaborate with the Board of Education to determine if and when a project should be presented to the community for vote.
- 3 Utilize the results of the **Special Education Audit** to define long term program improvements and near-term actions.
- 4 Develop a plan of action for the implementation of a **Universal Pre-K program** in the Haldane community for the 2024-2025 school year.
- 5 Identify a resource that can be used to **objectively evaluate** the district's improvement efforts, celebrate success, and coordinate resources.



## *Blue Devils Back on Campus*

Haldane students and their families were (mostly) all smiles as they returned to campus on September 5. Christine Jamin, Elementary Principal, ceremoniously opened the school doors following an exuberant student countdown. It was a sticky start to the year with temps in the upper 90s but students quickly settled into their routines. Perhaps the new wayfinding signs around campus helped point them in the right direction.





## ***Eighth Graders Lean Into Leadership and Team Building***

On September 13, the 8th grade teachers and students headed to the Taconic Outdoor Education Center to kick off the year as a team. The forecasted clouds and rain did little to dampen the students' excitement for a day off campus. While there, the 8th grade team took part in leadership and team-building exercises designed to strengthen the connection of the class. During these experiences, teachers and students had the opportunity to see each other in a new light outside of the traditional classroom environment. It was a perfect start to the school year and a great way to build rapport and bonds that will lead them through a successful 8th grade year.



## ***Ecology Class Stream Exploration Leads to New 6th Grade Friend***



Baby Grey  
Tree Frog





## *From the River to the Road*

Haldane seniors kicked off their final year on campus with the annual kayaking day on the Hudson River. The hot temps had many students “falling in” for a refreshing dip. The two-part day also included a simulated driving course with the help of Putnam County. The SIDNE driving program simulates impaired driving to give students a firsthand look at the dangers of driving under the influence.





## Homecoming 2023

Haldane celebrated Homecoming with Spirit Week themes, the traditional Pep Rally, and the Senior Scoop the Loop. The highlights: a return of the pre-football Homecoming Parade and a coveted win over Tuckahoe!





# HALDANE ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2023 INDUCTEES



On Sunday, September 24, 2023, during Homecoming Weekend, the Haldane Athletic Hall of Fame inducted its sixth class of outstanding athletes and coaches at a brunch reception at the Highlands Country Club.

***Coach Larry Brigati***  
***1990 Baseball Team***  
***Kristen Faust '96\****

***Anthony Del Vecchio '01***  
***Brian Rubino '05***  
***Abbey Stowell '18***

Thank you to the Athletic Hall of Fame Committee, the Blue Devil Booster Club, the Haldane Athletic Department, and our many local sponsors.

The Haldane Athletic Hall of Fame recognizes the accomplishments and contributions of Haldane athletes and coaches. Learn more about these inductees or recommend an athletic contributor for next year's class on the [Haldane website](#).



## College Board Recognizes 5 Haldane Students

Congratulations to National Merit Semifinalist Helena Kottman! Four Haldane students also received National Recognition from the College Board for the Small Town Award: Gabe Lunin-Pack, Julian Schwarz, Amelia Kupper, and Trajan McCarthy.



## Claes Nobel Educator of Distinction



High School Principal Julia Sniffen was named a Claes Nobel Educator of Distinction by The National Honor Society of High School Scholars. Mrs. Sniffen was nominated by High School Senior Helena Kottman.

## NYSSMA Recognizes Haldane Musicians



Robert Freimark, 11th grade clarinet, was selected as a NYSSMA All State Alternate. All State is the highest level performing ensemble event in New York State. Delia Starr, 9th grade flute and piano, was selected as a Winner by the NYSSMA Young Composers & Songwriting Committee. She will perform her piece *The Lighthouse* for solo piano in the Young Composer Honors Concert at the NYSSMA Winter Concert in Rochester this December.



## Backpacks from Blue Devils



The Blue Devils' fall varsity teams came together to build jam-packed backpacks for Haldane students who needed a little boost getting ready for back-to-school this year. Each team tackled different grade levels and purchased the supplies needed to help others start the year off right.

## Fun Run at the Philipstown Hub 5K



The Haldane Varsity Cross Country and Tennis teams paired up to run the Philipstown Hub's Annual 5K on Saturday, September 2. It was a beautiful day to take a run through their hometown and help give back to an important Haldane supporter.

## Remembering September 11th



Despite the rainy weather, the High School History Club maintained their dedication to creating the annual 9/11 memorial on the front lawn of the high school.

## Getting Involved at the Club Fair



More than 20 clubs set up shop at the annual Club Fair, inviting their peers to join them in a range of social, service, and talent-based clubs. It's never too late to join! High schoolers can check out the club meeting schedules [here](#).



# OCTOBER 2023

**WED  
4**

Flu Clinic  
at Haldane

**THU  
5**

Middle School  
Picture Day  
Middle/High School Q1  
Progress Reports

**FRI  
6**

Putnam County  
Early Dismissal Drill  
MS/HS 2:00pm  
ES 2:45pm

**MON  
9**

No School  
Columbus Day/  
Indigenous Peoples' Day

**WED  
11**

9th Grade Retreat  
PSAT/SAT Day  
Senior Writing &  
College Visits

**WED  
11**

PTA Meeting  
Haldane Band Room  
3:15PM

**THU  
12**

Spooky Movie Night  
High School Students  
7:00-9:00PM

**SAT  
14**

Haldane School  
Foundation  
Fundraiser

Taste of the Valley

Glynwood  
6:00-9:00PM

**MON 16 - FRI 20**

Elementary/Middle School  
Book Fair

**THU  
26**

Grades 9 and 10  
Parent Night  
6:30 PM

**SAT  
28**

Touch a Truck  
Fundraiser  
10:00AM - 1:00PM  
Haldane Playground

**TUE  
31**

Elementary  
Halloween Parade  
1:45PM

**TUE  
31**

HS Student Council  
Fundraiser  
Trunk or Treat  
3:00PM



## Become a Haldane Partner

Please consider joining or supporting one of Haldane's partner organizations. Their contributions to academic, athletic, and artistic programming are a vital part of each school year at Haldane.

### HALDANE PTA

[Learn More](#)



### HALDANE SCHOOL FOUNDATION

[Learn More](#)



### HALDANE ARTS ALLIANCE

[Learn More](#)



### BLUE DEVIL BOOSTER CLUB

[Learn More](#)



***Move over Punxsutawney...  
What kind of winter is ahead?  
Only Full Day Phil knows for sure!***



### BOARD OF EDUCATION

*Peggy Clements, Ph. D. President  
Maggie Valentine, Vice President  
Ezra Clementson, Trustee  
John Hedlund, Trustee  
Sean McNall, Trustee*

### ADMINISTRATION

*Philip Benante, Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools  
Christine Jamin, Elementary School Principal  
MaryAnn Seelke, Ed. D., Middle School Principal  
Julia Sniffen, High School Principal  
Regina Kaishian, Ed. D., Director of Pupil Personnel Services  
Josh Elder, Director of Curriculum and Human Resources  
Tom Cunningham, Athletic Director and Dean of Students  
Adam MacNeil, Director of Facilities  
Catherine Platt, School Business Manager*