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Through combined efforts of students, staff, parents and community members, our mission is to foster the confidence, knowledge, cognition and character necessary to instill a strong work ethic, to create an environment of tolerance and respect, & to ignite an attitude of inquiry and enthusiasm for learning that will enable students to become productive, responsible citizens.



Dear Families and Community Members:

The economic outlook continues to signal troubled waters ahead for everyone state-wide. As we build the budget, we are aware of the needs of our students but know we must balance that with understanding what our taxpayer challenges will be. State Aid projections will be announced this upcoming month for schools. The increases in costs to run schools are also impacted by the economy. Currently, we are looking at right-sizing through attrition, using reserves, collaborating with BOCES for shared services and analyzing further efficiencies. Prior to the holidays, Mrs. Stamboly and I met with Senator Griffo and Assemblywoman Buttenschon to discuss the district's needs and seek support for the district.

Along with the budget, the district will continue to include a Capital Outlay Project. The State allows these small projects to be done by schools in order to maintain buildings. State Building Aid is received to offset costs for these projects. The project for 2023-2024 school year will be to further secure the front entrance of the building, inclusive of new doors and security options. Over the past few years, this has been identified as high priority need.

Every five years, schools are required to complete a Building Condition Survey (BCS) with the architects that must be submitted to the State. This survey looks at all structures of our facilities to identify needs and when items need to be repaired or replaced to ensure a safe learning environment. Based on the findings, the district will build a plan to address the identified areas of concern and present a Capital Project to go out to voters during the 2023-24 school year.

The district has been notified the Beekman Gymnasium will no longer be eligible for State Building Aid. This means that any upgrades to this facility will need to be supported fully by the community. The Board of Education will be having many discussions on how we can continue to support Beekman

gymnasium financially. Community members with ideas, please forward those to the Superintendent's Office for Board of Education consideration.

School will be in session for the NYS Regents week from January 24-27. Due to the fact we have only a few students taking exams, we cannot close down instruction. During this week, students will be taking local exams during their regularly scheduled classes.

Once Mrs. LaGase, our new superintendent, comes on board, she will spearhead a study to look at the district's current status and identify areas of need to ensure our students are receiving the best possible education in a small school setting. Consultants will be used and paid for through a grant to assist with this project. This study will give the district the necessary tools to build forward.

I want to thank everyone again for such a welcoming and supportive time in the district. This is an amazing school district with a caring community, strong staff and wonderful students. I am impressed and believe that with consistent and high expectations, our students will excel in their programs and life. Over this next month, Mrs. LaGase and I will work closely so that the transition in leadership is smooth.

Best wishes for a great future and success for our students.

Sincerely,
Dr. Kathleen Davis

Interim Superintendent
New York Mills Union Free Schools



On January 10, Mrs. Michele LaGase was sworn in as the new New York Mills UFSD superintendent.



The New York Mills Union Free School District Board of Education announced the appointment of Michele LaGase as the District's new Superintendent of Schools during their December 20, 2022 meeting.

LaGase is currently the Chief Human Resources Officer for the Utica City School District. She will tentatively begin duties as Superintendent for the New York Mills UFSD on January 23 2023, having been selected by the Board of Education to replace Dr. Joanne Shelmidine, who retired on September 30, 2022.

"I am honored to be selected as the next Superintendent of Schools for the New York Mills Union Free School District," said LaGase. "My vision for the District is one that will be cultivated by the Board of Education, parents, students, staff and community members. I look forward to continuing to move the District forward while sustaining the traditions of such an outstanding community."

"After two full searches and many hours of interviews, we are excited to announce Michele LaGase as our District's next superintendent," said Kristin Hubley, president of the New York Mills Union Free School District Board of Education. "The Board had the incredible responsibility of choosing the right fit for our community. The needs of students, staff and the community; as outlined by input from surveys and meetings gathered earlier this year; were always at the forefront of our discussions. While the candidate pool consisted of incredibly talented and highly experienced educators, we feel that with Ms. LaGase we have found the perfect fit for our district. She brings with her an impressive mix of experience, passion and dedication to our local community. The Board of Education looks

forward to working with Ms. LaGase to move our district forward while keeping our small town culture at the forefront."

Prior to assuming the role of Director of Human Resources, LaGase served as Director of Grants, Contracts and Compliance; Principal of John F. Hughes Elementary School and Academy Assistant Principal of Thomas R. Proctor High School, all in the Utica City School District. LaGase previously served as Summer School Principal in Sauquoit and Holland Patent and Middle/High School Guidance Counselor (6-12) and Director of Pupil Personnel Services/CSE Chairperson Administrative Intern, both in the Frankfort-Schuyler Central School District.

LaGase earned her Associate of Science degree in Chemical Dependency Counseling from Mohawk Valley Community College, her Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from SUNY Institute of Technology, her Master of Science in Education degree in School Counseling from SUNY Oneonta and her Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Administration from SUNY Cortland.

The New York Mills UFSD Board of Education plans to host a Meet and Greet event with LaGase at a later date and time so that the community may get to know her in an informal setting. Information regarding the date, time and location of the event will be forthcoming.

43rd Annual NYM PTO Craft Fair

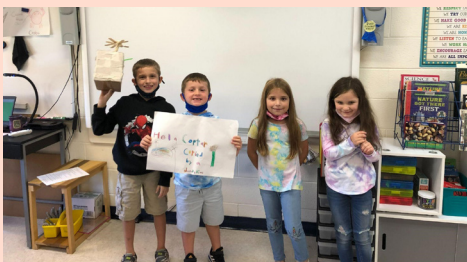
The New York Mills PTO's 43rd Annual Holiday Craft Fair was held on December 3 and 4. There were more than 100 vendors showcasing their handmade goods, and school clubs hosted fundraisers and raffles. There was also a hot, homemade food menu and a baked goods sale through the Candy Cane Cafe.

At the event, there were vendors selling goods ranging from homemade foods and candies to crocheted gifts and glassware. New York Mills also opened up new areas in the school to enable a more fluid Craft Fair experience.

In past years, approximately \$25,000 was raised to be donated back to the students and school for various needs such as graduation, senior trips and teacher assistance.



EBD/STEM



Our district is thrilled to continue to offer a new program that will enhance children's understanding and familiarity with science, technology, engineering and math. My name is Ava Simon and I was a former third grade teacher at New York Mills. I have been in the district for more than 18 years and I have loved being the STEM teacher for grades K-6. The program I will be implementing is called, Engineering by Design (EbD), which aligns with the Next Generation Science standards. One of the beliefs of this program is, "...that the ingenuity of children is untapped, unrealized potential that, when properly motivated, will lead to the next generation of technologists, innovators, designers and engineers." I am honored to be given this opportunity as I want to make a space where students can express themselves in a way where they can create, problem solve and develop skills, talents, thinking and mental rigor. More importantly, a place where failure and mistakes are embraced, as it is the gateway to success. As Thomas Edison once said, "I haven't failed—I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work. Many of life's failures are people who didn't realize how close they were to success when they gave up." Creating this kind of environment for children has a lot of potential to change the way we inspire authenticity and future innovators of the 21st century. I look forward to working with all of your children and I thank you for your continued support. If you want to stay connected and see what your children are up to, join us on Instagram [@nymebd](#).

Scientifically yours,
Mrs. Simon

HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

SCHOLASTIC ART HONORABLE MENTION, TEMPEST PERFORMANCE AND DONUTS FOR NYM



SCHOLASTIC ART COMPETITION *Honorable Mention*

Danielle Pereira won a Scholastic Art Award for her pastel drawing of a fox. The title is "The Fox's Changing of the Seasons", and she earned an Honorable Mention award when her art was selected out of 411 pieces of art in her category. The Scholastic Art Competition has supported and recognized exceptional artists for 100 years.

Danielle's Scholastic Art accomplishment was recognized at a ceremony on Jan. 17 at the SRC Arena at Onondaga Community College at 7:00p.m. Her fox drawing will also be exhibited at the Whitney Applied Technology Center at OCC from January 11 - March 3

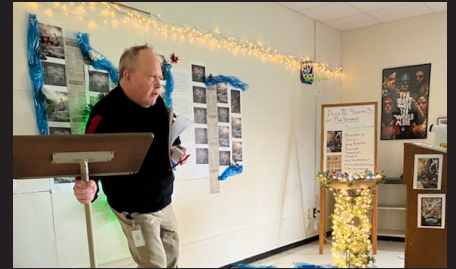
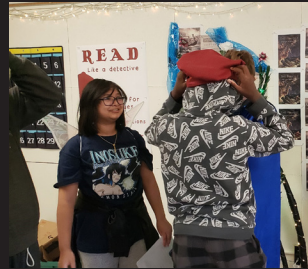
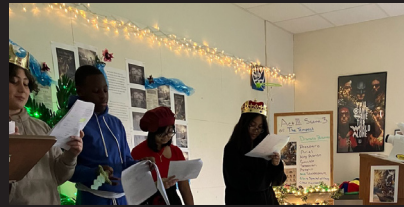
Mr. Eric Vollmer is proud of Pereira's efforts in the art studio and glad that she is representing the New York Mills Art Department!

You can find out more on the CNY region website, www.artandwriting.org.

SHAKESPEARE'S THE TEMPEST

Eighth grade English Language Arts students recently studied William Shakespeare's "The Tempest." To help them understand and appreciate the richness and beauty of the text, Mr. Klopfanstein rewrote a version of the play, blending modern English with the original Elizabethan English and adding emojis to the lines of dialogue to provide cues about the tone and emotion intended.

With funding from the New York Mills Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO), Mr. K was able to construct an island set in the classroom and purchase props and costumes for the students to use when they acted out this modified version of the play. This immersive experience allowed the eighth graders to engage with the text by watching and performing it as a play. Using the skills they gained, they will independently "translate" monologues from "The Tempest" into contemporary speech and write an essay about the themes explored and the central questions raised by the text.



NYM STUDENTS TREATED TO DUNKIN'



Students in grades 7-12 were recently surprised with treats from Dunkin' on behalf of the administration, as a way to show their appreciation for the students.



HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

INDOOR TRACK AND FIELD, VARSITY BOWLING AND PHYSICS TURKEY ROLL

Members of the NYM UFSD Indoor Track and Field team set exceptional records for sectional and state qualifier meets during the month of December at the SRC Arena on the Onodaga Community College Campus and at Utica University.

PLACING IN THE TOP 6

1st Place 300m - Arianna McClendon | 1st Place High Jump
Cardin Chau | 1st Place 55m Hurdles - Kathryn Williams
2nd place Pole Vault - Rose Jeff
5th Place 55m - Dominick Moore

NEW SCHOOL RECORDS

Rose Jeff - Pole Vault 9'0" | Gavin LaPaglia - Shot Put 33'3" |
Arianna McClendon - 300m 43.74 & 1,000m 3:21.08
Dominick Moore - 55m 6.97 | Chelsy Plows - Weight Throw 23'5.5"
Lin Sein - Long Jump 11'2"
Kathryn Williams - Long Jump 14'3.5" & Triple Jump 31'1.5"

SECTIONAL QUALIFIERS

Arianna McClendon - 55m, 300m and 1,000m
Dominick Moore - 55m and 300m | Frank Calhoun - 1,000m
Rose Jeff - High Jump and Pole Vault | Cardin Chau - High Jump
Kathryn Williams - 55 Hurdles and Triple Jump

STATE QUALIFIER MEET

Cardin Chau - High Jump | Rose Jeff - Pole Vault
Arianna McClendon - 300m

SCHOOL RECORDS:

Chris Chaffee - weight throw, 24'1.5"
Cardin Chau - 55m hurdles, 10.19
Rose Jeff - pole vault, 8'0" | Gavin LaPaglia - shot put - 32'7"
Arianna McClendon - 55m, 8.03 | Dominick Moore - 55m, 6.98
Chelsy Plows - weight throw, 21'1"
Kathryn Williams - 55m hurdles, 10.06 & triple jump, 30'10"
Mya Hagenbuch, Nevaeh Kimble, Arianna McClendon and
Kathryn Williams - sprint medley relay, 4:49.81

SECTIONAL QUALIFIERS

Cardin Chau - high jump | Rose Jeff - high jump and pole vault
Arianna McClendon - 55m | Dominick Moore - 55m
Kathryn Williams - 55m hurdles and triple jump

STATE QUALIFIER MEET

Cardin Chau - high jump | Rose Jeff - pole vault



PHYSICS TURKEY ROLL



CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. MAHANNA



Earth science and eighth grade science teacher, Mr. Mahanna was honored by the Mohawk Valley Jugglers Varsity Hockey team during their Teacher Appreciation/Recognition Ceremony on January 11.

VARSITY BOWLING TEAM ON A ROLL!



The team remains undefeated as of January 10 at 10-0 on the season and recently triumphed over Sherburne-Earlville by nearly 300 pins.

Leading bowlers included Nathan Alford, Joe Cirusuolo, Ryan Connor, Xander McCoy and Isaiah Soblaski.

Congratulations on an exceptional season thus far!

Winter Concert



The elementary school band and choir recently performed their winter concert.

The choir was accompanied by a metallophone, hand chimes, sand blocks and triangles and featured a descant of sixth grade singers. Thank you to Mrs. Polarolo for accompanying us!



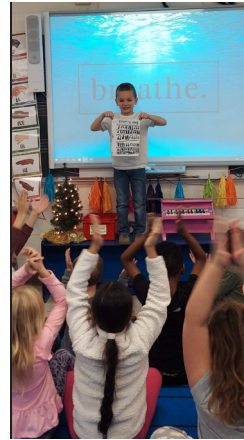
HELPING STUDENTS *sing*

The temperature is now dropping. For the best vocal health, make sure students are wearing appropriate outdoor clothes.

BELOW 40°: Students should be wearing at least winter coats, scarves, hats that cover the ears and long pants.

BELOW 50°: Students should be wearing at least winter coats and long pants.

BELOW 60°: Students should be wearing at least hoodies or spring jackets.



JACKSON'S RHYTHM

Jackson (grade one) wrote his own rhythm piece at home and brought it in to perform for the music class.



African Rhythm Unit

Performing in groups sixth graders: Collin K, Victoria M, Piper C and Abi H.



ELEMENTARY NEWS

DOG TOYS, ART CONTEST, JUICE AND PAINT, AND UTICA COMETS COLORING CONTEST

Dogs in Need



This holiday season, the fourth grade class made dog toys out of fabric! Each student created a knotted toy that was donated to the local humane society. They had so much fun and truly enjoyed this act of kindness.

A special thank you to Mrs. Taylor for the idea, materials and time spent with our class.

ART CONTEST Winner



Congratulations to Emily Zeun on winning the New York Mills Fire Department Auxiliary 2022 Art Contest. She drew a coloring book page for elementary school students and her design was chosen as the winner. Zeun's drawing will be printed and distributed to local schools.



Fourth Graders Get Creative

Mrs. Sroka's fourth grade class was treated to a "juice & paint" party by their classmate Teagan F. to kick-off the holidays. Their paintings turned out great!

KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS RECOGNIZED IN UTICA COMETS COLORING CONTEST



The Utica Comets 2022 Coloring Contest has officially wrapped up its eighth year. The annual contest for students in kindergarten through fifth grade saw participation from 20 schools all across the Mohawk Valley and gave students the opportunity to show off their artistic abilities.

The winners were chosen by both the Utica Comets players and staff. Prizes include custom team signed jerseys, Comets VIP experiences, player classroom appearances, pizza parties with mascot Naudie and more.

Congratulations to New York Mills Elementary students Chase Fischer and Secilia Millan who placed second and third respectively in the kindergarten category.

NY Mills

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Visit us on the web www.newyorkmills.org

TURKEY Trot

On November 19, students from the NY Mills UFSD gathered together to participate in the Turkey Trot. While the weather may have been chilly, students were ready to run. Students ran laps around the track and were awarded different color ribbons as a measure of success through their participation. Students and teachers sported fun turkey-themed hats during the event and there was even a Turkey Trot mascot cheering students on as they raced.

