

NYMILLS

Fall
2021

UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER



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Message from the Superintendent

Dear Residents,

While this year is still not a “return to normal,” I believe we are in a position to frame our “normal.” With all of us working together – staff, students, families and our community – we have already proven that we can do great things. Yesterday was a launching pad for today, and we will use our knowledge and experiences from last year as we begin this year with our students. While still a consideration, rather than a focus on contact tracing and infection rates, we will focus on our students and their learning.

While we start this year with all of us wearing masks in the building, we are not under an executive order (at this time). The consistent and proper wearing of masks will limit the number of students who would need to be quarantined if another student in the classroom tested positive for COVID-19. As was true last year, our goal is to keep everyone in school every day. We know that the best instructional model is when our students and our teachers and staff are in person.

Over the summer we said goodbye to dearly loved and admired colleagues as they pursued other opportunities. We also say “welcome” to our new Marauder family members: Sam Famolaro, Justin Mahanna, Kristy Wallace, Alana Wielgosz and Justin Worboys. We also welcome back Ron Klopfanstein, Rachel Lewis and Lisa Soja. In addition, Lily Corathers and Audriana Molina are with us full-time. You will learn more about each of them in our newsletter.

I am excited for this new school year and all of the activities and traditions back on the calendar. Please do not hesitate to reach out to any of us if you have any questions or concerns. By working together, we continue to be “Marauder Strong.”

Respectfully,

Joanne Shelmidine, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



OUR MISSION

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, and to ignite an attitude of inquiry and enthusiasm for learning that will enable students to become productive, responsible citizens.

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**ALL STUDENTS
EAT FOR FREE!**

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**Don't have
internet access?**

Join our mailing list for paper updates! To sign up, contact District Clerk Stefany Scharf at sscharf@newyorkmills.org or by calling 315-768-8127 (option #2, option #1)

welcome
BACK
TO
SCHOOL

first day,
fun day!



We want to make lunch time a pleasant time for the students as well as keeping them interested in staying in school.



ALL STUDENTS EAT FOR FREE!

ALL STUDENTS

CAN RECEIVE FREE BREAKFAST AND LUNCH DURING THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR
Please complete free/reduced meal applications when they become available.

We look forward to a great year!



New Elementary School Playground is Constructed During Summer Recess

Following a busy summer with quick progress being made by contractors, the new playground at New York Mills Elementary School was completed in time for the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year. The playground is part of the Capital Project previously approved by District voters.

This playground is unique in that elementary students had a hand in designing it. The students were involved in the design since its inception, when Dr. Shelmidine visited each of the elementary classrooms to garner input from students regarding what kind of equipment they would like the new playground to feature. The final plans included a zip line, more climbing equipment, more opportunities for swinging and bouncing, handicap accessible swings and more.

When students were dismissed from school at the end of the 2020-2021 school year, the old elementary playground was still intact. Quick progress was made throughout the summer, with demolition of the old playground beginning at the end of June and being completed within a matter of days. Construction on the new playground began soon thereafter, and by the time students returned to school on September 7, they had a brand new playground waiting for them to play on.

The new playground has something for every student to enjoy, and we can't wait to see our students have fun on the new equipment for years to come!



Ribbon is Cut on New Playground Before K-12 Open House

Prior to the start of the annual K-12 Open House, a ribbon was officially cut on the new playground at New York Mills Elementary School.

Following brief remarks by Superintendent of Schools Dr. Shelmidine, several students helped Dr. Shelmidine cut the ribbon on the new playground, a symbolic celebration as the playground had officially opened to student and community use on the first day of the 2021-2022 school year.

During Open House, students and their families had the opportunity to meet with teachers, learn more about what students would be learning this school year, enjoy the new playground, socialize, and have a hot dog dinner cooked by Dr. Shelmidine and members of the New York Mills Board of Education. It was a fun, relaxed way to kick off the new school year and get to know one another better.

Thank you to everyone who attended the ribbon cutting ceremony and Open House!



Students in Summer ELA Class Take a Journey Through Time

In Mr. Klopfanstein's summer ELA class for students in grades 6-8, students learned about H.G. Wells' "The Time Machine" and Jules Verne's "Journey to the Center of the Earth." During the last day of summer school on August 5, students in the class took their own journey through time in a life-sized board game created by Mr. Klopfanstein.

The game was a multi-sensory, multi-media experience with lights, music, props and more. Students worked in teams to move across the board, amassing torches to fight off Morlock attacks, and answering questions about "The Time Machine" and other science fiction books to win levers to repair the time machine and get back to the proper timeline.

The game was a fun, interactive way to test the knowledge they've garnered throughout the class. Some of the work completed throughout the class included writing sci-fi stories of their own in text, graphic novel or manga form.

Mr. Klopfanstein was recently hired to teach seventh and eighth grade ELA, and he's looking forward to teaching many of these same students in the fall.



Miss Spaziani's Seventh Grade Social Studies Class Gets Creative!

The seventh grade Social Studies students recently finished their first unit on Native Americans. During the unit, the students completed a web quest on different Native American dwellings. The students learned that the type of dwelling a tribe chose was dependent on their geography and available resources. With this information, the students were challenged to create a Native American dwelling of their choosing. One of the options the students had to choose from was to create a 3D model. Several of the students used raw materials from outside of their own homes to build the dwelling. The most common dwellings that were created were of the Teepee, Long House, Brush shelter and Igloo. Allowing the students to embrace their creative side in social studies has truly paid off. The amount of time and effort the seventh grade students put into their projects is truly remarkable and utterly impressive!



NEW EMPLOYEE *Spotlight*

LILY CORATHERS, *General Music & Choir Teacher*



Miss Lily Corathers is the K-6 general music and choir teacher. Last school year she taught at New York Mills as an employee of the Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES, which makes this her second school year with the District. She has taught at all grade levels as well as private lessons, and this will be her 12th year teaching.

Miss Corathers is originally from the Mohawk Valley, but she went to college in West Virginia and stayed for 13 years. She came back to the local area to be closer to family, and although she has been to 10 different countries and nine different states, she says that CNY is home. Outside of school, Miss Corathers can be found doing things with her daughter such as volunteering at church, walking her dogs or sewing. She lives with her nine-year-old daughter, her fiancé and two big dogs – and as a bonus, her sisters and brother all live nearby as well!

This school year, Miss Corathers is looking forward to the things that students will create with their classes and groups, and the (often silly) things they will discover together. She is also looking forward to working with great staff and utilizing space in her own classroom.

"New York Mills is an excellent place with excellent people," Miss Corathers said. "I'm lucky to have had a sneak preview last year! I'm excited to work with my peers and students and, through music, make connections to all things!"

SAM FAMOLARO, *Social Studies Teacher*



Mr. Sam Famolaro is the new social studies teacher at New York Mills Jr./Sr. High School, and he teaches Global 10, Global 10 AP, and Government and Economics. Prior to joining the New York Mills school community, he was a site supervisor for the Young Scholars Program at Proctor High School and a TA at Clinton Elementary School.

Mr. Famolaro was born and raised in Utica, which he still calls home. Outside of work, he enjoys soccer, reading, basketball, community service and cooking. He has a cat named Charlie, who's a bit of a jerk.

This school year, Mr. Famolaro is looking forward to building strong relationships with students, faculty and staff.

"I'm honored to be invited into the New York Mills family," Mr. Famolaro said. "I will do my best to earn my place and I look forward to working with everyone!"

RON KLOPFANSTEIN, *ELA Teacher*



Mr. Ron Klopfanstein is the new seventh and eighth grade ELA teacher at New York Mills Jr./Sr. High School, and he also teaches "American Society Through the Decades." During the 2018-2019 and 2020-2021 school years, he taught 11th grade Regents ELA at New York Mills as a long-term substitute. He also has experience teaching in the Oneida City School District as well.

Outside of school, Mr. Klopfanstein teaches English at Utica College, is a reporter and multi-media journalist for the Utica Phoenix, and previously wrote for the Rome Sentinel and the Clinton Record.

Mr. Klopfanstein lives in Westmoreland with his husband James and his dog Kona, where he also serves as president of the Westmoreland Historical Society.



JUSTIN MAHANNA, *Earth Science, 8th Grade Science Teacher*



Mr. Justin Mahanna is the new earth science and eighth grade science teacher at New York Mills Jr./Sr. High School. He previously worked as a teaching assistant for general chemistry at Utica College, and as an analytical lab technician for Indium Corporation.

Mr. Mahanna grew up in Barneveld and currently lives in Utica. Outside of work, he enjoys spending time outdoors and listening to music. He has two bull mastiffs, Rosie and Lucy.

This school year, Mr. Mahanna is really looking forward to teaching and getting to know his students. In the short time he's been with the District, he's already met many great students and fellow teachers.

"I love being in a smaller school setting," Mr. Mahanna said. "Being able to know all the students and faces walking through the halls really gives a sense of community for me."

AUDRIANA MOLINA, *School Social Worker*



Ms. Audriana Molina is the new school social worker at New York Mills. She previously worked as a program manager at a care management agency in Utica, and after earning her master's degree in social work, she went on to work as a social worker with the Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES. Before officially joining the New York Mills school community, she spent four days a week in the District as a BOCES employee.

Ms. Molina was born and raised in Utica, which she still calls home. Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her dog, Oliver; trying new local restaurants; and she works as a children and family therapist in Oneida County. This school year, Ms. Molina is looking forward to being able to spend more time with the students, faculty and staff that she has come to know.

"Mental health and wellness is my passion, I think it's incredibly important for all ages," Ms. Molina said. "I am thrilled that I am able to continue to be a support surrounding these topics for students, staff and the community at New York Mills!"

KRISTY WALLACE, *Literary Specialist*



Ms. Kristy Wallace is the new literacy specialist (reading teacher) at New York Mills Jr./Sr. High School. She previously worked as a sixth grade reading teacher in the Richfield Springs Central School District.

Ms. Wallace is from West Frankfort and she currently lives in Utica. Outside of work, she enjoys reading, going to the gym and cooking. She also loves to coach and play basketball, soccer and lacrosse. Ms. Wallace has two cats, Kiki and Hudson, and a dog named Indiana Jones.

Ms. Wallace is very excited to be a part of the New York Mills school community. This school year she is looking forward to working with students and teachers to help achieve their goals, as well as coaching and having a great season.

"I'm looking forward to working with everyone this year!" Ms. Wallace said. "I'm also looking forward to helping students find their love for reading!"



NEW EMPLOYEE *Spotlight*

ALANA WIELGOSZ, *Spanish Teacher*



Miss Alana Wielgosz (pronounced "will-gus") is the new French and Spanish teacher at New York Mills. Prior to joining the District, she taught French in the East Syracuse Minoa Central School District.

Miss Wielgosz is from Marcy and currently lives in Utica. Outside of work, she enjoys baking, playing the violin, roller skating and watching superhero movies. She's currently working toward her masters in French through Middlebury College.

This school year, Miss Wielgosz is looking forward to all of the activities and events that are once again possible due to the fact that school is back in-person.

"I am truly looking forward to growing alongside my students this year!" Miss Wielgosz said.

JUSTIN WORBOYS, *Science, Physics and Robotics Teacher*



Mr. Justin Worboys is the new science, physics and robotics teacher at New York Mills Jr./Sr. High School. He's originally from Brockport and is now living in New Hartford with his wife.

Outside of work, Mr. Worboys enjoys disc golf and traveling. This school year, he's looking forward to apple cider and donuts in the fall, and skiing and snowboarding in the winter.

"I've had some amazing teaching experiences working internationally and now I am happy to be back near my family," Mr. Worboys said. "I am looking forward to New York seasons and events. I appreciate all the great people that have made me feel welcomed. I am excited to have a great year."

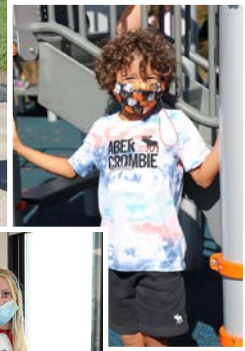
Multicultural/Debate Club

Each month the Multicultural/Debate Club learns about a new country. The club celebrates the country by enjoying both sweet and savory treats. This past month the students learned about the Czech Republic and next month will be Indonesia.

Mrs. Davis and Miss Spaziani welcome all students, grades 7-12 to come learn and taste something new!



SPIRIT WEEK



PARENTS BILL OF RIGHTS FOR DATA PRIVACY AND SECURITY

The NY Mills UFSD seeks to use current technology, including electronic storage, retrieval, and analysis of information about students' educational experience to enhance the opportunities for learning and to increase efficiency.

The following is the New York Mills Union Free School District's bill of rights for data privacy and security:

1. A student's personally identifiable information (PII) cannot be sold or released by the New York Mills Union Free School for any commercial or marketing purposes.
2. Parents have the right to inspect and review the complete contents of their child's education record including any student data stored or maintained by the New York Mills Union Free School. This right of inspection is consistent with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In addition to the right of inspection of the educational record, Education Law §2-d provides a specific right for parents to inspect or receive copies of any data in the student's educational record. The New York State Department of Education (NYSED) will develop policies and procedures pertaining to this right.
3. State and federal laws protect the confidentiality of PII, and safeguards associated with industry standards and best practices, including, but not limited to, encryption, firewalls, and password protection, must be in place when data is stored or transferred.
4. A complete list of all student data elements collected by the State is available for public review at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/sirs/documentation/NYSEDstudentData.xlsx>, or you may obtain a copy of this list by writing to the Office of Information & Reporting Services, New York State Education Department, Room 863 EBA, 89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234.
5. Parents have the right to file complaints with the New York Mills Union Free School about possible privacy breaches of student data by the New York Mills Union Free School's third-party contractors or their employees, officers, or assignees, or with NYSED. Complaints regarding student data breaches should be directed to:

Dr. Joanne I. Shelmidine, Superintendent
New York Mills Union Free School
1 Marauder Blvd.
New York Mills, NY 13417

Phone: (315) 768-8127
Email: jshelmidine@newyorkmills.org

All complaints must be accompanied by a Breach or Unauthorized Release of Student Data Complaint Form and submitted in person to the superintendent's office. The form can be found on our website under District>District Procedures & Policies>Breach or Unauthorized Release of Student Data Complaint Form. A complaint can also be submitted to the New York State Chief Privacy Officer using an online form at: <http://www.nysed.gov/data-privacy-security/report-improper-disclosure>.

Supplemental Information about Third Party Contracts

For purposes of further ensuring confidentiality and security of student data — as well as the security of personally-identifiable teacher or principal data — the Parents' Bill of Rights (above) and the following supplemental information must be included in each contract that this district enters into with a third-party contractor with access to this information:

6. The exclusive purposes for which the data will be used;
7. How the contractor will ensure that the subcontractors it uses will abide by data protection and security requirements;
8. When the agreement with the third party contractor expires and what happens to the data at that time;
9. If and how an affected party may challenge the accuracy of the data that is collected; and
10. Where the data will be stored and the security protections taken to ensure the data will be protected



CODE OF CONDUCT - PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

Harassment, Discrimination, and Bullying is Prohibited at School


You should never feel that it is not safe for you to come to school and participate in all school activities. You should never be prevented from concentrating on your school-work because another student or a school staff member is teasing you, making fun of you, pushing you around, or threatening you in some way, because of your race, color, weight, national origin (where your family comes from), ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex, or any other reason.

You may not act toward another student in a way that reasonably might make them feel threatened or unsafe, or that might reasonably make them unable to concentrate on their school work, because of what you think about their race, color, weight, national origin (where their family comes from), ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex, or any other reason. It is against school rules for you to do this by your physical actions or by your verbal statements, including electronic messages.

When responding to acts of harassment, discrimination, and bullying, the district will take an age appropriate approach to remedy the situation with the goal of prevention and education; as well as, intervention and discipline. We will consider the nature and severity of the conduct, the developmental age of the student engaging in the conduct, the person's prior disciplinary record, and the impact on the student at whom it was directed. School employees who witness conduct that may be harassment, discrimination, or bullying, or who receive a report of such conduct, are required to report that conduct to the Dignity Act Coordinators or the superintendent. This should happen by the end of the following school day.

We look forward to working with you to ensure a safe, harassment free learning environment for all students. The full version of the Code of Conduct is available on our website, or by contacting one of the principals. Please keep us informed and encourage your child to reach out to one of the principals, or another staff member if he or she does not feel safe, or is being bullied.

Respectfully,



Joanne Shelmidine, Ed.D

Superintendent of Schools

CONTACT INFORMATION

Should you have a harassment, discrimination, or bullying concern that you wish to report, you may do so to the following Board of Education appointed Dignity Act coordinators:

Mary Facci: 315.768.8124

Brent Dodge: 315.768.8129





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Mary Facci, *K-12 Executive Principal*
Brent Dodge, *K-12 Principal*

Visit us on the Web

<http://www.newyorkmills.org>

Classes of 1970 and 1971 Celebrate with Reunion

"Reunited and it feels so good!"

On August 7, members of the New York Mills Class of 1970 and Class of 1971 gathered at the Roselawn Pavilion for a long-awaited reunion, which was cancelled the previous year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. On the evening prior to the reunion, a meet and greet was held at the New York Mills Historical Society.

It was a welcome opportunity for New York Mills alumni to gather and celebrate their 50- and 51-year reunions. Attendees socialized, reminisced on their favorite school memories, caught up on lost time, and enjoyed one another's company after more than a year of social distancing and much uncertainty.

Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the reunion a success!

