



PAL-MAC

PULSE

WINTER 2023

A HOMECOMING TO REMEMBER!

Pal-Mac celebrates
another exciting
Homecoming!

ALSO INSIDE:

- "REACHING"
TO THE FUTURE
- ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT
- THANK YOU,
VETERANS



Pal-Mac Pulse

Pal-Mac Magazine

Winter 2023 Volume 27

Superintendent

Robert R. Ike, Ed.D.

Board of Education

Laura Arrington, President

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Chris Doyle

Susan Herendeen

Gary W. LaBerge

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Official Newspaper

Times of Wayne County

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with the W-FL BOCES

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Credits

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Opinions expressed are those of the authors of their subjects and do not necessarily represent official positions of the Palmyra-Macedon Central School District.

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@palmac_csd

@Pal-Mac TV

#PalMacProud



The Season of Sportsmanship

Dear Pal-Mac Families:

In the true spirit of the season . . . “Bah humbug.”

In Dickens’ classic story, Ebenezer Scrooge has a hard time getting in the spirit. At first glance, my message may seem to portray a similar attitude. But take heart; keep reading.

As we enter another exciting Winter season of Pal-Mac athletics, I am compelled to address a matter of great importance that is integral to the essence of our District – sportsmanship.

In the Fall, the District rolled out its Mission, Vision, and Core Values as adopted by the Board. At the core of these elements, is a commitment to the development of our students, fostering not only academic excellence but also instilling values that shape them into positive citizens in the world.

This upcoming athletic season provides us with an excellent opportunity to reinforce these principles.

As fans, parents, and players alike, it is crucial that we embody the spirit of our mission and vision during these events. Cheering for our teams is natural and encouraged, but let us remember that our actions in the stands and on the field can reflect who we are as a community.

Displaying good sportsmanship, whether it’s a win or a loss, aligns with our core values of positive relationships, fostering safety and a sense of belonging, and acting with integrity and honesty.

These values are not only strongly encouraged, but are a

part of both District and local policy. Profanity, degrading remarks, hostile shouting, and intimidation toward students, coaches, officials, competitors, and other fans will not be tolerated and are grounds for removal from the event site.

It is our responsibility to recognize that our students look to us as role models. Therefore, let our conduct be a shining example of the principles we hold dear. By demonstrating respect and sportsmanship, we are instilling the values that will serve them well in their future endeavors.

Thank you to every fan who continues to show the Pal-Mac Way. The positive ways we act as a community send a clear message to others that we care for our students and coaches. As Tiny Tim reminds us, “Bah humbugs” must be turned into blessings. I am asking every member of our community to hold each other accountable.

Don’t wait for someone else to step in. Be active in reminding Pal-Mac fans of our high standards of behavior. If you need help, seek out a site supervisor, administrator or school safety/law enforcement.

Let’s take a stand on behalf of our kids and not let others reflect poorly on our school district.

Together, we celebrate skill, character, and unity. Together, we are Pal-Mac Proud.

In the True Spirit of the Holidays,

BOB IKE
SUPERINTENDENT



Process For Weather-Related School Closures

Monitor 13WHAM TV, Spectrum News, WROC TV 8, WHAM AM 1180, WVOR FM 100.5, WHEC TV 10, WACK AM 1420, WARM FM 101.3, ParentSquare and the district website for closure-related information

With the winter season underway, now is a great time to remind the Palmyra-Macedon community about the process for school closures due to inclement weather.

An early dismissal or school closure will apply to in-person and remote learners.

First and foremost, the safety of students and staff is always a top priority when making a decision regarding the closure of school. With safety as a guiding principle, the decision to close school will be made based on numerous factors outlined below:

- Road conditions reports from transportation staff, town/highway personnel, meteorological experts and law enforcement agencies
- Amount of snow and ice accumulation
- Whether or not precipitation is continuing
- Building and parking lot conditions
- Temperature and wind chill
- Forecast predictions

Early dismissal may be necessary if weather conditions warrant, with a goal of ensuring students are home safely prior to conditions worsening.

The ultimate decision to close school is that of the superintendent. The district will make every attempt to make weather-related decisions in a timely manner.

Once an announcement has been made to close school, the decision will be final.

Announcements regarding school closures will be sent out via our messaging system, ParentSquare. Contact information can be updated here: palmaccsd.org/contactupdate.

In addition to ParentSquare, a closure notice will be posted to district social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) and the district website. Local news outlets will be notified of the decision as well. News outlets to monitor for closure-related information include 13WHAM TV, Spectrum News, WROC TV 8, WHAM AM 1180, WVOR FM 100.5, WHEC TV 10, WACK AM 1420 and WARM FM 101.3.

Parents/guardians are advised not to call the district regarding weather-related closures unless it is an emergency.

During the cold days of winter, it is important to remember to bundle up to prepare for being outside for walks to a bus

The decision to close school will be made based on the following factors:

- *ROAD CONDITION REPORTS
from transportation staff, town/highway personnel, meteorological experts and law enforcement agencies
- *AMOUNT OF SNOW AND ICE ACCUMULATION
- *WHETHER OR NOT PRECIPITATION IS CONTINUING
- *BUILDING AND PARKING LOT CONDITIONS
- *TEMPERATURE AND WIND CHILL
- *FORECAST PREDICTIONS

stop or to school. Warm clothing includes jackets, gloves, scarves, and boots. If your family needs assistance in the provision of warm, suitable clothing, please contact the Health Office at your child's school.

The district does not take the decision to close school lightly and carefully examines each decision on a case by case basis. No perfect decision exists and should parents/guardians feel conditions are unsafe, it is advised to exercise best judgement to decide if your student should attend school.

DATES TO REMEMBER (NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS)

MON. 1/15.....	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
MON. 2/19 – FRI. 2/23	February Break
FRI. 3/15.....	Professional Development Day
FRI. 3/29	Good Friday
MON. 4/1 – FRI 4/8	Spring Break
THURS. 5/27	Memorial Day



OPENING DAY 2023

THE DISTRICT CELEBRATED ITS STAFF, AND
THE FUTURE DURING THE ANNUAL OPENING
DAY CEREMONY ON AUG.30. CHECK OUT THE
LIST OF AWARD WINNERS BELOW!

STAFF MEMBER OF THE YEAR

PRIMARY SCHOOL: JOHN MAYOU

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL: MARNI SURACE

MIDDLE SCHOOL: KRISTY PHIPPEN

HIGH SCHOOL: NICOLE BRYANT

TRANSPORTATION : CHRISTOPHER CHILDS

TEACHER OF THE YEAR

PRIMARY SCHOOL: NATALIE CIFUENTES

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL: KATIE LUKE AND
HEATHER ROBBINS

MIDDLE SCHOOL: AMY BAEHR

HIGH SCHOOL: DEB DAVIS

SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD

EDWARD O'BRIEN

MICHAEL FELICE





MATH INNOVATIONS

Some Pal-Mac classrooms are handling an innovative approach to student learning in mathematics.

The approach is called "Building Thinking Classrooms," and it focuses on a more active, student-led effort when it comes to learning math.

The concepts are part of a book by the same name, written by author Peter Liljedahl. Right now, nine Pal-Mac teachers are studying the book and are applying some of its strategies to the classroom.

We spent a day in Intermediate School math teacher Cherie Dragomani's class to see what it's all about.

"You have to see it to believe it," Dragomani said. "It's different, so different."

Different, because instead of sitting at their desks and listening to instruction, students were standing and moving around.

But there's a purpose behind it, we promise.

Each class period begins with a briefing, it's where Dragomani presents a problem to the students. At the root of each problem is a set of numbers. Dragomani then tasked the students with making five expressions with those numbers.

An expression is a number, an operation sign (multiplication, division, subtraction, or adding) followed by another number.

Students then break off into randomized groups, which Dragomani picks daily. The groups set up in front of one of several whiteboards and or sheet paper setups along the classroom walls.

Then it's up to them to figure out the rest.

"They're talking, and they're talking math," Dragomani said. "They're doing math, and they don't even realize they're doing math."

Students will rotate roles from problem to problem. One person holds a marker at a time while the others strategize. Everyone has a hand in solving the problem, and students are not allowed to sit down and not help.

If a student or a group is having trouble with a problem, they have the ability to move around the room and look at how other groups are solving their problems. The idea is for the students to learn how others learn and give positive feedback.

One of Dragomani's students, Kono, said she enjoys the new approach. She says sitting down at the desk and simply writing on a piece of paper didn't allow for the same teamwork.

"When you're on a board and you're in a group, you can ask people if our work math is correct," Kono said. "When you keep working together more and more, you can understand what [a

classmate] is trying to say.”

Dragomani keeps a close eye on the groups while they work, and will occasionally step in to offer up a suggestion, or to ask questions.

You read that right, she asks the questions.

“I’m just asking them to really explain their thinking and what could you do differently,” Dragomani said “And that’s why I don’t let them erase so that they can see what they did before and can make improvements on their problem-solving.”

While the approach may be different, it still falls in line with New York State education standards.

So why bring this technique to Pal-Mac?

Dragomani says she learned about the concept through her husband, who teaches math in another local district. Over the Summer, she approached the District’s Instructional Coach for Professional Learning Kristen Wright-Bigler about the idea.

The two decided to introduce the practice in the form of a book study. Wright-Bigler says its implementation is tied to the District’s seven-year “Blueprint for Action” plan. Specifically, the decision fell under the objective of “Academic Excellence.”

The teachers who were taking part in the book study did so voluntarily.

“It’s not about a program, it’s about an approach and a philosophy,” Wright-Bigler said.

Dragomani says there was a learning curve to philosophy at first, partly because students were used to the traditional way of learning. But she also had to re-tool her approach, as the philosophy emphasizes autonomy and delegation over total teacher control.

Despite that, Dragomani says she is seeing extensive personal and student growth over the last few months. Tests are still in the standardized format, but Dragomani’s assessment of student success goes beyond that.

She says she’s seen students who may have struggled in the previous learning format understand the concepts a little better.

“We want problem solvers, we want thinkers, we want kind students,” Dragomani said. “And I think that that’s what this brings.”

Those traits are something Dragomani says will help students down the line when they look for a career.

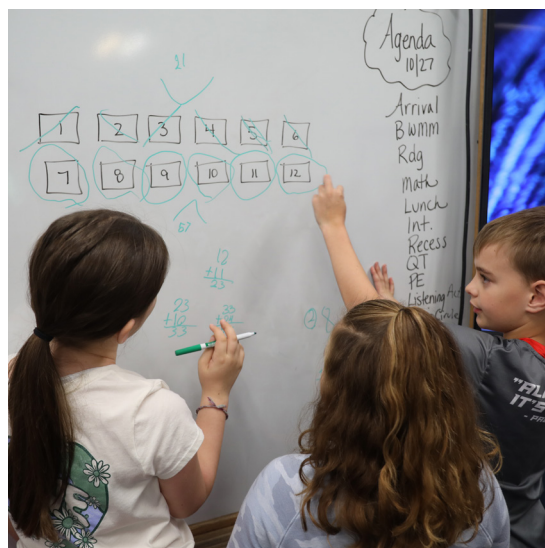
For now, the goal is to keep implementing techniques from the book in the test classrooms.

Wright-Bigler says she and the nine teachers are working together on a proposal to expand the practice within the District.

A timeline is still being developed.

“My goal is to just keep doing it,” Dragomani said. “We’ll find tasks that are like this that support the standards that we’re teaching and the program that we’re using and just keep kids thinking and talking about math and getting excited about it.”

Scan here to watch the program in action!



Future

Pal-Mac's commitment to its students includes getting them future ready.
That's whether they choose to go to college, a trade school, the workforce or the military.



Middle School Career Day

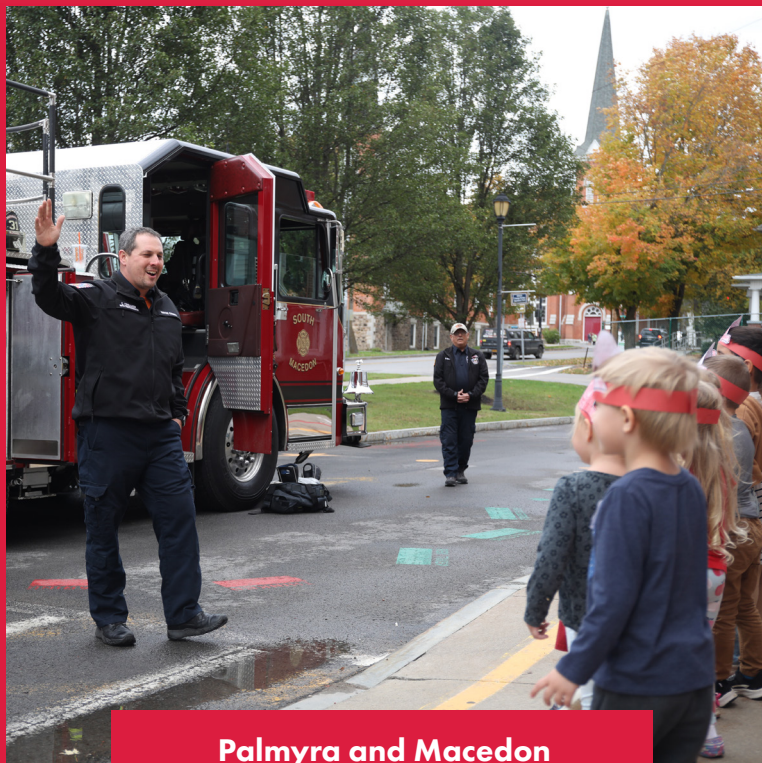


Wayne County Career Carnival



READY

Students took part in several future-focused opportunities through the Fall semester.



Palmyra and Macedon
Fire Departments visit PMP



Rochester Area College Fair



Pal-Mac Alumni Spotlight: Class of 2019 grad, Matthew Morgan

Morgan is currently a software developer for Paychex, an international human resource and payroll company based less than a half hour down the road in Rochester. He joined the company in June but previously interned there the year before.

His story involves a whim, an app development, and some adversity.

Before all of that, Morgan was a dedicated Pal-Mac student. He was a member of the Middle School National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) and a long-time member of the Pal-Mac Red Raider soccer team. He also split his time between being a full-time student and working part-time after school during his junior and senior years.

"It kept me in the habit of staying on top of things," Morgan said.

Upon graduating in 2019, Morgan attended nearby Monroe Community College (MCC) to study Computer Science.

Comp sci. was not something Morgan had prior knowledge of, outside of a family member who worked in the field.

Morgan's mother, Kelly, is a secretary at the Pal-Mac Primary School. She says Matt was interested in computers from an early age, but they weren't sure what he'd study when he got to college.

"Honestly, it was kind of on a whim," Matt said. "I've always been good with technology, and I wanted to do something with that."

He added that he researched the career field and noticed more opportunities for computer science.

Morgan took mostly general education classes during his one year at MCC. He then transferred to the State University of New York (SUNY) Brockport.

He transferred to Brockport in 2020, just as the COVID-19 pandemic began. His first semester was exclusively online. After that, Morgan says it was a mix of in-person and online classes.

He called this time "difficult" because he didn't know many people there, and there weren't many opportunities for in-person meetings.

"The transition wasn't the best, but it ended up working out, so I can't complain too much," Morgan said.

Working out, it did.

Morgan says he remained focused on his work as the campus started opening back up. He soon connected with one of his professors, Dr. Sandeep Mitra, who he says helped open new opportunities for him.

Mitra initially tipped us off to Morgan's story, as he wrote a several paragraphs-long email speaking high praise to Morgan's efforts during his time at Brockport.

"Matt is easily one of the top 0.5% of the students I have had in my nearly 30 years at Brockport," Mitra wrote.

Another professor, Dr. Adita Kulkarni, also worked closely with Morgan during his time at Brockport. Morgan was in Kulkarni's Computer Organization and Architecture class, but the two soon worked with each other outside of class on a research project.

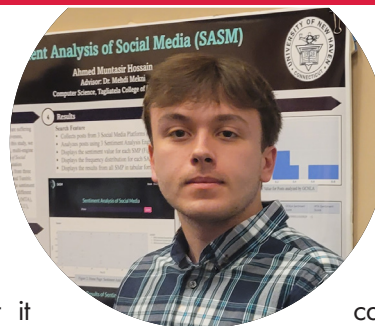
What followed was several peer-reviewed papers and posters that Matt published and/or presented with Kulkarni.

Of note, their paper "Analyzing User Communication on Mainstream and Alternative Social Media Platforms using Natural Language Processing: A Case Study on the COVID-19 Pandemic", was published in the International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction.

The conference is a series of published books viewed by scientists across the world.

Kulkarni says she was impressed with Morgan's effort in class, which led to her reaching out for the research.

"Matt was outstanding both inside the classroom and in the out-of-class activities," Dr. Kulkarni said. "In general, he is self-motivated and responsible, has a good



work ethic, and is a very nice person."

Morgan called the research experience

"great", as he learned how to code, though he knew it was not exactly what he wanted to do when he graduated.

Despite this, Morgan also used his coding skills to develop an app for SUNY Brockport's French department. The app automates reports submitted by professors at the end of the year into a more readable and printable format. The app is still currently in use by the university.

These experiences helped develop his growing interest in software development and helped him feel more "community" between his academics and social life.

Through his work with Kulkarni and Mitra, Morgan earned his internship with Paychex in 2022.

Now, he and his team are developing new features within existing applications at the company. He attributes his work and his professors to getting him to his point.

"I really want to stress how important networking is," Morgan said. "Internships are extremely important. That single-handedly helped me get my foot in the door, which is why I have my job today."

Morgan added the community college route should not be looked down upon, as he says it can be a valuable financial and educational experience.

Matthew Morgan transformed a whim into a budding career with an impact already being felt across an industry. While he shared his gratitude for his own journey, he shared some parting advice for someone working to find their own journey.

"It's okay to not know what you want to do because you will find it eventually," Morgan said.

GOT SPIRIT?

Pal-Mac sure did!

October 3- 8 was Pal-Mac's annual Homecoming Week.

The week featured school-wide pep rallies and athletic events highlighted by a parade and a fireworks display during halftime of the varsity football game.

Thank you to the Pal-Mac community for your support during this special week. Together, we are #PalMacProud.



View a cinematic recap of Homecoming by visiting the District YouTube page.

PAL-MAC THANKS VETERANS

Our nation's heroes were the focus of a series of ceremonies at Pal-Mac through the week of Nov.11. Students, faculty and staff in the District recognized a record-number of local veterans by sharing cards of appreciation, singing songs, or simply saying "thank you."



ATHLETIC NEWS

WINTER 2023

COLLEGE SIGNINGS:



Regan Diehl
St. Bonaventure - Lacrosse



Maya Ikewood
University at Buffalo - Soccer



Braidon Woodward
University at Buffalo - Wrestling



VARSITY FOOTBALL

WAYNE FINGER
LAKES LEAGUE
WEST: CHAMPIONS

WAYNE FINGER
LAKES LEAGUE:
UNDEFEATED
CHAMPS

GIRLS SOCCER

FINGER LAKES
LEAGUE CHAMPIONS



GIRLS SWIMMING

FINGER LAKES LEAGUE
CHAMPIONS

ELIZABETH SHARE:
SECTIONAL CHAMPION,
NYS TOURNAMENT FINALIST

GAMEDAY CHEERLEADING

SECTIONAL APPEARANCE IN
FIRST SEASON



PAL-MAC ON STAGE!

The Pal-Mac Theater Department put on two dazzling shows in the Fall!

First, the High School Drama Club presented "She Kills Monsters." The comedic drama combined fantasy with adventure throughout all four days of shows!



Next, Pal-Mac Middle School students took part in some nautical nonsense in their presentation of "The SpongeBob SquarePants Musical: Youth Edition!" The performance was a fun live-action adaptation of the popular animated TV show!



PAL-MAC DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS: BY THE NUMBERS

The District is proud of its relationship with the Pal-Mac Dollars for Scholars Chapter. Thanks to your generous donations, the chapter is among the most successful in New York State!

Here's a breakdown of its recent success:

35 years of service

\$2 million dollars to college-bound seniors (Second-highest in raising money in NYS)

\$170,000: Total money awarded to 114 members of the Class of 2023

4th in dollars distributed average of all years (Highest in Rochester region)

We thank the chapter for all its done to set Pal-Mac seniors up for success!

Scan the QR below to check out the DFS website!



AMAZING ALUMNI

PAL-MAC IS FULL OF AMAZING ALUMNI, AND WE'D LIKE TO HIGHLIGHT THEM! THE SET UP IS SIMPLE: IF YOU KNOW A PAL-MAC ALUM WHO HAS DONE SOMETHING AMAZING, SEND AN EMAIL TO DREW HYMAN

AT:

ANDREW.HYMAN@PALMACCSD.ORG



PAPER

Did you know Pal-Mac offers a free online tutoring program for students in Grades 6-12?

Visit [Paper.co](https://paper.co) to learn more!

You can also contact Pal-Mac Superintendent for Instruction and Student Learning Brian Brooks at brian.brooks@palmaccsd.org with any questions.



FOLLOW PAL-MAC ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR NEWS AND UPDATES



@palmac_csd

@Pal-Mac TV

#PalMacProud

Want to know the latest Pal-Mac news? If you use Social Media, you can find timely announcements, stories and events on all of our platforms. You can find us on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram at @PalMac_CSD, or check out our YouTube Page. The District invites its followers to use the hashtag #PalMacProud when commenting and sharing posts. Links to all of our accounts are available on the District website, palmaccsd.org. The district website remains a comprehensive source for the latest updates and information. The District News section, found in the quick links area on the left side, features frequent updates on district happenings and important announcements. The district will also continue to send Pal-Mac E-News monthly to email inboxes to highlight district accomplishments and events. Pal-Mac Pulse, an in-depth print and digital magazine, is distributed through the United States Postal Service with a digital copy available on the district's website as well.

It is Palmyra-Macedon Central School District's policy to provide for and promote equal opportunity in education and employment. Pal-Mac CSD does not discriminate, in its programs and activities, against: (i) any student or any candidate for admission (or parent of any such student or candidate); (ii) any employee or applicant for employment; or (iii) any third party, on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age; and, it provides equal access to its facilities to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Further, Pal-Mac CSD does not discriminate on the basis of religion or creed, religious practice, ethnic group, weight, sexual orientation, gender, military status, genetic status, marital status, domestic violence victim status, criminal arrest or conviction record, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal non-discrimination laws, or unless based upon a bona fide occupational qualification or other exception. Inquiries regarding Pal-Mac CSD's non-discrimination policies and grievance procedures or Title IX should be directed to:

Palmyra-Macedon Central School District, 127 Cuyler Street, Palmyra, NY 14522, Phone: 315-597-3400

U.S. Department of Education New York Office, Office for Civil Rights, 32 Old Slip, 26th Floor NY, NY 10005-2500, Phone: 646-428-3800, Email: OCR.NewYork@ed.gov



OUR SCHOOLS

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PALMYRA, NY 14522
315-597-3400

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL
4 WEST STREET
MACEDON, NY 14502
315-597-3400

MIDDLE SCHOOL
163 HYDE PARKWAY
PALMYRA, NY 14522
315-597-3400

HIGH SCHOOL
151 HYDE PARKWAY
PALMYRA, NY 14522
315-597-3400

DISTRICT OFFICE
127 CUYLER STREET
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PAL-MAC PULSE

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