

North Tonawanda City Schools



Message from the Superintendent

The cooler temperatures have finally arrived and that means winter is just around the corner. After a busy summer of moving and construction, September came with continued heat and many new faces in many different buildings. The turnout at each K-3, 4-6 and 7-8 grade buildings was staggering the first few days of school. This also resulted in a few tweaks to entrance and dismissal procedures at each building. A huge THANK YOU goes out to the staff here in North Tonawanda for making the district reconfiguration happen over the summer.



October came, and we settled into the multi-purpose field and stadium with several soccer and football games. The stadium and press box were rededicated to George J. Vetter and Mr. Dick Grapes respectively. Each school held an open house and parents were given the grand tour of each building by their children. We also started our One District, One Book initiative where the students, parents, staff and community all got involved to promote a love for reading in our K-3 buildings. Please visit our web page for more information and to see the guest readers reading different chapters of "The Chocolate Touch".

As we look forward to November, we shift gears and start to prepare for state and local testing for children and continued training in all curriculum areas for the staff. We are eager to implement these new curriculums across grade levels and all subjects. Our students' academic successes with these new and engaging curriculums will be an outcome we can all be proud of. November is also the month that we do our "Tree of Hope" fund-raiser and community event. This year the high school will be lit up for the holidays starting November 29th. Please stop by for fun that evening and be part of our silent tree auction.

Before we know it 2018 will be gone and we will be welcoming in 2019! We look forward to an exciting school year as we work together to build the future of North Tonawanda today, for a brighter tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Gregory J. Woytila
Superintendent of North Tonawanda City Schools



North Tonawanda Starts One District, One Book Initiative

Ohio Street Principal, Michael Hiller, says everyone at the North Tonawanda City School District is excited about their new One District, One Book initiative. "We have such a push for literacy initiatives in our K-3 buildings supported by continual staff development in Readers/Writers Workshop. We are trying to build this identity piece for our district and bridge it with the parents. We thought it was a unique opportunity to bring this to NT."

One District, One Book is a national program that is geared towards students and their families in a school district. It involves students and their families reading the same book, a chapter a night for two weeks. When Superintendent Greg Woytila heard about the program while touring Lewiston-Porter Central School District he thought it would be a great way to unite the district and the community. "When we were there we weren't just looking at the academics, we were looking at the building culture and how it works. We talked about how we could make it our own and tweak it and make our three K-3 buildings function as one because we have them at opposite ends of the town. We were looking for an activity and event that focused on the curriculum, but brought all three schools together doing the same activity at the same time. That is how we came up with One District, One Book."

The purpose of One District, One Book is to make a community of readers and community become a key part of implementing the program. Mr. Hiller, who headed up the committee of dedicated educators and enthusiastic community members said, "It was a very committed effort by our teachers, who love reading and love this community, that really wanted to give something special back. Not only are we hoping kids get excited, we are hoping to get some families involved with reading. Hopefully we can push out some of the important work we are doing here out into the homes with that level of collaboration. I want to thank all of the members of the committee for their time and contributions. They are as humble as they are committed. We owe them a debt of gratitude."

The District had to choose two books for the students and their families to



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WNY STEM Hub Recognizes North Tonawanda and 10 Other Local Schools for Commitment to STEM Learning

WNY STEM Hub, the region's premiere convener of STEM programs and one-of-a-kind STEM learning experiences for youth, today announced that five STEM Schools on the Move were recognized in 2018 at the Accomplished Level and six were recognized at the Engaged Level. The STEM School on the Move distinction is given to schools for their commitment to encouraging science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) experiences across 6 dimensions of quality STEM learning. Accomplished Level is the highest level of recognition given to a school. The five Accomplished schools are: Depew Union Free School District, Genesee Valley - Grades 7-12 School, Mount St. Mary Academy, Nichols School and Wellsville Elementary. At the Engaged Level are: Amherst High School, Cleve-Hill Middle School, **North Tonawanda Intermediate**, The Laboratory Research

School in Bioinformatics & Life Sciences (Buffalo), Royalton-Hartland Central Schools and Salamanca High School. Salamanca High School also received recognition for their work in Sustainability Education.

"Each honoree demonstrates a true commitment of time and resources to STEM education. These schools exemplify a focus on STEM by getting students excited about learning and careers in STEM," said Michelle Kavanaugh, Ed.D., president of the WNY STEM Hub. "By creating a culture of STEM learning, the Accomplished and Engaged Schools are making progress in establishing a pipeline for our next generation workforce."

WNY STEM Hub proudly honors schools every year at an awards dinner hosted by Roswell Park. The awardees are selected through a competitive process. A total of 18 schools have been



The North Tonawanda Schools Team accepts the award from WNY STEM Hub's president, Dr. Michelle Kavanaugh, and Siemens Senior Account Representative, John Partsch.

designated at the Engaged Level and another 11 have received distinction at the Accomplished Level. Siemens Industry, Inc., a global powerhouse in electronics and engineering, sponsors these K-12 awards each year.

One District, One Book Initiative continued from page 1

vote between. Since Platter's Chocolates recently moved into the North Tonawanda school district with their new home in the Wurlitzer Building, the committee thought it would be fun to be pick two chocolate themed books, *Superfudge* by Judy Blume and *The Chocolate Touch* by Patrick Skene Catling. Kelly DiGuseppe, General Manager at Platter's Chocolates, says they were honored to be the inspiration. "I love it and I am so thankful that we got to be part of it. We are in the heart of North Tonawanda and we are so excited to be part of it."



says she thinks it is a great initiative. "During the voting I had a third grade class come in for a visit and the kids were really excited about voting. I had a mother come in because her kindergartner told her to come in and vote so she did."

The official unveiling of the One District, One Book results was October 11th at the Riviera Theatre at 7:00pm. The winner was "The Chocolate Touch"! Students and their families can watch videos on the North Tonawanda City School District website of guest readers such as Mr. Woytila, Maryalice Demler, Mayor Arthur Pappas, Board of Education member Mr. Herbert

and other community members reading one chapter from the book. Community partners have also agreed to give a 10% discount on their products if the students and their families come into the establishments with their book.

"Over the last two years, we have worked tirelessly, as a district, to have a unified literacy vision, improve collaboration around reading and writing instruction, and grow as literacy learners ourselves," says Mr. Hiller. "This new initiative will not only engage students, but it will also allow us, as a community of learners to invite parents into the experience."



Voting between the two books began Monday, September 17th and went until September 21st at Platter's Chocolates, the North Tonawanda Public Library, the Boys and Girls Club and the North Tonawanda Recreation Center. Marcia Bugyi, North Tonawanda Library Children's Librarian,



College Fair Helps Students Determine Next Step in Education Journey

Over 97 colleges, universities and military branches had representatives at the North Tonawanda High School on September 19th. The Guidance Office believes it is a great way to start the school year, so students start to think of their plans after graduation.



Brad Williams with College of Environmental Science and Forestry at SUNY Cortland representative.

Driving the District Forward

The North Tonawanda CSD Board of Education and the District Office sat down over the summer on a Saturday for a work session.

The all-day meeting was about setting goals and learning about the district's curriculum and development. Everyone felt very positive about the progress they made.



North Tonawanda High School Introduces New Assistant Principal Josh Janese



The North Tonawanda High School would like to give a warm welcome to their new Assistant Principal Josh Janese.

Mr. Janese grew up in Lewiston. He attended Niagara University and double majored in Finance with a minor in Economics. In addition, he taught Social Studies and Special Education at the secondary level. He acquired his first Masters in the area of Secondary Literacy in 2011. "I had several long-term assignments in Grand Island, Lew-Port and Niagara Wheatfield, and summer school at BOCES. During that time I wanted to gain more knowledge in the area of special education, beyond certification, so I obtained another Masters in Special Education in 2013."

In the school year of 2013-2014 he became an 8th grade special education teacher at Amherst Middle School. "I worked on a lot of transition goals with students. I tried to acquire them some career and college readiness opportunities where we would go to Erie 1 BOCES Harkness fairs. I was also a PTSA representative and part of the Alumni Association, Athletic Boosters Club representative." Also during that time he was taking administration courses at Niagara University and graduated this past August.

One of his passions has been coaching swimming since he graduated high school. "I am kind of sad that chapter of my life is closing, but I also know there is a really good reason why, I got this opportunity." He says he also enjoys gardening because he finds it really relaxing. "I also really enjoy spending time with my family when I have the opportunity. I love going to Shea's and Bandits games as well. I like how family friendly and crowd interactive the Bandits games are."

Mr. Janese says he is excited about the next step in his career. "Everyone says your fishpond gets a lot bigger. I am going from being accountable for 75 students a day to 1,200 students a day. Each student brings different strengths and talents, and I am looking forward to the opportunity to help them recognize and foster those talents at the high school level as they prepare to be an adult.

I want to help them find their passion and see how it can line them up to a career, and getting to know all the families will be very important to me. Each student will be equally important and I want to help facilitate their growth process."

Lumberjacks Bring Down the Axe on Tonawanda at T-NT Game

The NT High Schoolers had a great spirit week with their theme days, pep rally, chowder and of course the parade that took participants through the heart of their city.

The capper was that the North Tonawanda Lumberjacks won 7-0 at the 109th annual football rivalry between them and the Tonawanda Warriors.

Fans for both teams enjoyed the pregame festivities and excitement of the season's biggest game. Joe Caporicci scored the game winning touchdown cementing their champion status for 18 years in a row.





Students Get First Look at New Intermediate School

As everyone knows, the North Tonawanda City School District now has an Intermediate School (NTI) for fourth to sixth graders.

On August 27th, students and their families were welcomed in by Principal Katie Smith to see the new school, meet their teachers and take part in some art projects. Each orientation session provided time for small group guided tours led by faculty members, as well as an NTI overview provided by Mrs. Smith and other support staff.

“Our orientation sessions provided us the opportunity to welcome our students and families to NTI,” said Mrs. Smith. “Our motto this year is ‘Together, We are One’ and with that comes the responsibility to provide opportunities for students and families to come together to form bonds. We are focused on strong academic programming as well as character and leadership development in our intermediate level students. The NTI team is extremely excited about all that is to come throughout our first year!”



New Year Brings Changes to NT Fine Arts Program

The North Tonawanda City School District’s Faculty of Fine Arts welcomed students to school wishing everyone a year of smARTS.

Director of Fine Arts, Dean Vallas, said the Board of Education and Superintendent have made new strides to foster Fine Arts in the district. The most noticeable being the construction of a full-time Fine Arts Center at the High School. The old Gymnasium will be replaced with a state-of-the-art center that will feature both visual and performing arts. The new



facility will open later this fall. New arts facilities were also added to the Middle School and many classrooms were remodeled to give students greater opportunities to explore the arts.

In addition to physical changes, the district has restored valuable Arts programs. First, Visual Art classes are now scheduled for all elementary students. This brings back the K-1 classes that start the creative lives of kids. Also restored to the curriculum is the 4th grade Instrumental Program. Students at the new North Tonawanda Intermediate School will now be able to begin playing an instrument in 4th grade. Mr. Vallas said, “It is an exciting time for our district and fine arts. There will be many opportunities for students to further their creativity and excel in the arts.”

Information about Fine Arts in North Tonawanda can be seen on the Fine Arts page on the district’s website at www.NTSchools.org.

NT Pep Band Makes a Comeback

When Jason Ferguson was being interviewed for the Instrumental Music Teacher position at North Tonawanda, he knew that the District was looking to revive its pep band and marching band. “When they hired me in 2016, that was part of the decision making process,” he says.

“I took a couple of years to get to know the kids and build up a following and get them excited about music and decided that this is the right time.” After rehearsing all the music last spring and the first two weeks this year, the Pep Band made its debut. “I had a group of 40-45 kids play the first football game. It was a great turnout, I was thrilled about it. The students are having a great time with it. I am very happy to be part of the school community and the NT community at a greater capacity now.”



Mr. Ferguson says what he cares most about is that the students are having a great time. “They are participating in music in a way they enjoy to bring music to the community. I have received great responses from the teachers and the administrators. It seems like the community’s response has been very positive too. At the game I heard people say, it is nice to have a live band again. It is great to be part of this, I am having a blast.”

Chalking It Up to a Great School Year!

Students at Drake Elementary were greeted with some positive messages on their first day back.

Principal Janet Matyevich and staff spent the morning before the students arrived writing words of encouragement in chalk on the sidewalk outside the school. The students loved the colorful display and sent everyone in the building with a big smile on their face!



Principal Janet Matyevich with students Scarlett Hughes, Liam Rickard and Elliana Olexenko.

Drake Students Kick Off Community Projects

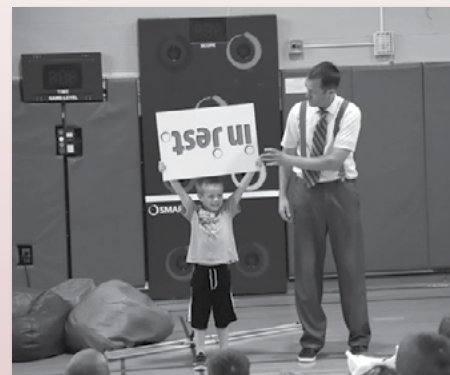
This year's theme at Drake Elementary School is kindness. Principal Janet Matyevich says the school does six projects total during the school year. "We will do three community and three internal projects. Our first community project is making bookmarks in conjunction with the North Tonawanda Public Library. Each student will decorate a book mark that shows a general positive message and a greeting from Drake School. The third graders are going to travel to the library to "hide" the bookmarks in books so the next reader finds a pleasant surprise. The librarians are going to pull out popular books so that the bookmarks have a better chance of being found."

To kick off the assembly the school was entertained by singers from the third grade.



Ohio Has Date with Inspirational Oddball

Principal Mike Hiller recently invited Nels Ross into Ohio Street School for a school assembly.



Mr. Ross is known as "The Inspirational Oddball" and his gravity-defying assemblies and workshops promote character education, anti-bullying, reading and STEM/STEAM through physical theater, variety arts and humor.

The students loved his performance and were inspired by his message.



NORTH TONAWANDA CITY SCHOOLS

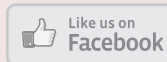
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College Consortium Helps Students Think About Future

The WNY College Consortium, hosted by NTHS Guidance Department and Career Center, took place on Oct. 3, 2018 in the High School Library.

Twenty-one local WNY colleges were available to answer questions and provide information for 11th and 12th graders at North Tonawanda High School.



Anthony DiBesco (11th grader) with Guidance Counselor Mrs. John.

Intermediate Students Help Out Kids Escaping Drugs

To celebrate Red Ribbon Week (October 23-31), the North Tonawanda Intermediate School decided to help young adults through the Kids Escaping Drugs organization by collecting personal care items for the population they serve. "We focused on the students making healthy choices for their minds and bodies," says School Principal Katie Smith. "Clearly at this age level they are very impressionable and we want to empower kids with decision making capabilities so that they do say no to drugs. We also want to teach them about serving others and this organization helped us to do both."



(LtoR) Gavin Bukoskey, Counselor Haleigh Brown, Hannah Pearce, Emily Vallone, Suzanne D'Amico and Brody Sparks.

Red Ribbon Week is about engaging youth in dialogues about the importance of making positive life choices and avoiding the temptation to use drugs and alcohol. As many are aware, there are many children in crisis here in the Western New York area. Kids Escaping Drugs is dedicated to ending the drug epidemic and empower families to live a life free from disease of addiction through community outreach, education and their residential treatment facilities for adolescents ages 12-23.

"We are getting ready to open our Promise House which is a stabilization facility for boys, 15 to 23," says Kids Escaping Drugs Director of Development, Suzanne D'Amico. "It is like an old-fashioned detox model and a halfway house. On December 1st, Palmerton Place, which is the girls' stabilization house for 15-23, will open. A lot of kids will come to us without anything and they were asking for essentials to give to the kids."

She says they are very grateful for the donations. "I think what the kids at the Intermediate School did is amazing. I think we need it more now than ever because the facilities will have 77 beds on the campus and a lot of our kids come to us without anything. We like to provide them with the necessities so they feel like they are at home and in a welcoming place."

Lady Jack's Team Getting Ready to Dive Into a Great Season

The Lady Jack's Swimming and Diving team are getting ready for another great season.



(left to right) Back Row: Matthew Schutt (Coach), Taylor Dietrich, Erin O'Bara, Megan McKie (Coach), Jeni Flach, Megan Price and Justin Moser (Coach). Middle Row: Jenna Hebler, Megan Orrange, Elizabeth Scott, Sarah Polek, Megan Harvey, Emily Mueller, Aracely Queen, Gina Krolewski, Julia Watson, Allison Chaplin, Lauren Price, Cassidy Allard, Shelby Sayeta, Hailey Hankinson and Alaina Roberts. Front Row: Madison Lederhouse, Savannah Hermanson, Lauren Schreck, Cierra Williams, Leah Gardiner and Kaitlyn Samsel. Missing: Hannah Craig, Paige Compton and Tammy Marillo.

NT Girl Scouts Take On Storm Water Project

Twelve Junior Girl Scouts from Troop 70268, all students at North Tonawanda Intermediate School, recently volunteered their time to make storm water safer for North Tonawanda residents.

After meeting with Civil Engineer Jaime Davidson from JMD Engineering, the young ladies investigated the conditions around their neighborhoods and as a team placed 70 storm water medallions at drainage sites, reminding residents not to dump harmful substances.



Group Pic (LtoR) Top row: Paige Cress, Juliana Haacker, Ava Sumi, Meredith Shaver and Madison Swartz. Bottom row (LtoR) Meredith Roberts, Aly McIlhenny, Bridget Lyons, Ella Smith, Charlotte Lyons, Emma Bush and Nora Davidson.