

The Grand Island Central School District Running Grand Island Central School District

www.grandislandschools.org

The Community Newsletter for the Grand Island Central School District

Grand Island Schools 2019 Capital Project Vote

Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2019 • 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. Grand Island High School Foyer, 1100 Ransom Road

Voter Identification Required (no pre-registration required)

Project Scope

- · Safety and Security
- · Health and Welfare
- Facility Maintenance
- Educational Program Improvements

Stay Informed!

Public Hearing

Two public hearings are scheduled for Dec. 20 and Jan. 3 at 6 p.m. in the Grand Island High School Professional Development Room.

Learn More!

- GICSD website, grandislandschools.org
- GICSD Twitter account, @grandislandCSD

Stay Connected Through Twitter!



Message From Your BOE President

I was privileged to work with a dedicated group of individuals that were tasked with developing a plan for our facilities that would ensure that our buildings are safe, well maintained and provide exceptional learning environments for all students. The Facility Committee worked for over a year to develop the plans for the \$24.1 million Grand Island Central School District 2018 Capital Project.



Community forums and workshops were held in October for input on the capital project. Safety measures to ensure we have heightened security at our middle and high school entrances, construction of athletic fields, as well and several other key building maintenance issues are included in the project's scope of work. A capital project referendum will be held Jan. 8 from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. in the high school foyer.

This project, as well as the many other activities that were held at the beginning of the school year, makes me proud to be part of the GICSD school-community. Anticipation for the 2018-19 school year was in full swing at the annual GISBA golf tournament. I enjoyed meeting many of the 98 golfers at River Oaks while working the putting contest throughout the day. Thank you to Jude Kuehne, Cheryl Chamberlain and the DECA students, Eric Fiebelkorn, and all involved in planning, attending, or sponsoring this successful fundraising event. The first half of the school year was productive for the BOE. During our retreat, we reviewed input for the five-year strategic plan. After 23 years in education, I saw something qualitatively different in this process. Online surveys were completed by each constituent group in our school-community, thousands of comments were reviewed, and focus sessions were conducted around themes emerging from the data. Thank you to our school-community and BOE for their participation in this important process. Identifying focus areas to address as a school-community will prepare Grand Island for our role as a championship district. In addition to our regular meetings, the BOE conducted a building and bus tour. Thank you to Rotary Club members for touring with us and to the well-spoken student ambassadors including Connor Muelhbauer, Alivia Cluine, Brooke Warner, and Cami Harding for leading the tour at Huth Elementary.

I hope that you enjoyed your holiday season with family and friends, and I want to invite you to attend one of our BOE meetings in 2019. Thank you for taking the time to read this issue of The Bridge and for being a part of our school-community.

Sincerely,

Ashli Skura Dreher, School Board President



A Special Thank You

Thank you to the Grand Island Board of Education and the Facility Committee for their work and dedication.

Facility Committee Members

Shawn Wright Young and Wright Architectural

> John Ticco Campus Construction

Rob Smithgall Young and Wright Architectural

> Kevin Donahue Campus Construction

> > Donna Tomkins BOE Trustee

Ashli Dreher BOE President

Joy LaMarca BOE Trustee

James Rozler Director of Facilities

Richard Hitzges Interim Business Official

Dr. Rubie Harris Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance

Karen Cuddy-Miller Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

> Michael Lauria GIHS Principal

John Fitzpatrick VCMS Principal

Mary Haggerty Kaegebein Elementary Principal

Denise Dunbar Sidway Elementary Principal

Dr. Ami Alderman Huth Road Elementary Principal

> Jon Roth Athletic Director

Dean Santorio Teacher/Coach

Cheryl O'Connor Teacher/Coach

Michael Murray Teacher/GITA President

Rick Walworth Custodian/SRP President

> Linda Lichtenthal SRP Vice President

Tom McMahon Maintenance/SRP Officer

Rick Ganci Financial Consultant, Capital Markets

Message From Your Superintendent

Dear Grand Island Community:

The New York State Education Department requires school districts to submit a Building Conditions Survey (BCS) every five years. A BCS is a thorough inspection conducted by a school district selected team consisting of at least one architect or engineer. The team conducts a visual inspection of all occupied school buildings to assess the current conditions of all program spaces in addition to major building systems and their components. Upon receipt of our BCS in 2017, we developed a facilities committee to further review and prioritize the needs as well as develop possible solutions. This dedicated team of Board of Education members, teachers, staff, community members and



Brian Graham, Ed.D. Superintendent of Schools

district administrators met monthly, for 10 months, in order to develop recommendations that address the needs of our school system. The recommendations of the committee led to the development of a scope of work by our architectural firm that falls within four major areas: safety and security, health and welfare, facility maintenance, and educational program improvements.

Under the scope of safety and security, the \$24.1 million capital project plan includes reconfiguring the front entrances at both the high school and middle school so visitors to those buildings will enter into a designated office area immediately upon entry. Under the scope of safety and health, a high priority is to replace the roofs at Sidway and Kaegebein elementary schools. The project includes renovations at each building. Updates to the high school musical wing, which is used daily by hundreds of high school and middle school students, will include adding water and a unisex bathroom to the wing. The project also includes a multi-sport synthetic turf complex which can be used by a variety of our sports teams, as well as by our physical education teachers during the day. The full scope of work is listed on page 3-4.

If this is the first time you have become aware of the project, I encourage you to visit the district website for more information. On those pages, we have placed a narrated PowerPoint presentation that was shared during two community forums in October.

Your vote is important and I encourage you to learn more about the scope of the project. Voting will take place Tuesday, Jan. 8 from 10 a.m. until 9 p.m. in the Grand Island High School foyer.

Sincerely,

Brian Graham, Ed.D. Superintendent of Schools

Absentee Ballot Information

Absentee ballots are available and there are specific reasons for the use of absentee ballots. Voters may request an absentee ballot application by writing to Grand Island Central School District, attn: District Clerk, 1100 Ransom Road, Grand Island, New York 14072 or by calling 773-8801 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. All completed applications must be returned to the District Office at least 7 days before the vote in order for the ballot to be mailed to the voter.

Please note: District offices are closed on Dec. 25, 26 and Jan. 1. District office is open 7:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. on Dec. 27, 28 and 31. Completed absentee applications can be left with the receptionist at the front desk.

Completed ballots must be received by the District Clerk's office by 5 p.m. on Jan. 8, 2019.

Voter Qualifications

Voter identification is required to vote.

Voters must be:

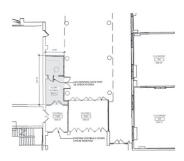
- 1. A citizen of the United States
- 2. At least 18 years of age
- 3. A resident of the district for at least 30 days prior to vote



Summary Scope of Work

Grand Island HS/MS - Renovations

- · Music Wing drinking fountain, wash sink and restroom
- HVAC replacement in the HS Library
- · Increase security at HS entrance
- Create a new secure MS entrance addition
- · Renovate the MS main and guidance offices
- · Provide air conditioning to HS Cafeteria
- Enclose the courtyard adjacent to the HS Gym, for sports equipment storage
- Disconnect and replace 29 existing unit ventilators in perimeter classrooms of the middle school 1967 building.
- HS Auditorium renovations
 - · Create a window opening in the sound booth
 - Improve auditorium acoustics





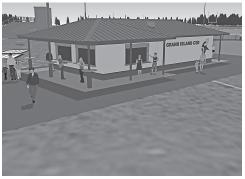




Grand Island HS/MS - Sitework

- Provide multi-sport artificial turf complex for baseball, softball, soccer, lacrosse and football with associated fencing, sidewalks and scoreboards
- New dugouts
- Replace existing tennis courts
- Build a new roadway, including all associated work, from parking at baseball field to parking by new athletic complex
- · New portable bleachers
- Concession building and restrooms
- Athletic field lighting





How Do Artificial Turf Fields Benefit Our Students?

- Outdoor Middle and High School physical education classes
- Multi-purpose for baseball, softball, soccer, lacrosse
- Corrects poor drainage so home games are not cancelled
- Brings baseball and softball home games back to our GICSD campus
- · Baseball/softball could host both their varsity and JV contests the same day
- · Allows for JV lacrosse on new field and varsity lacrosse in the stadium
- Available for GI community, travel and house leagues

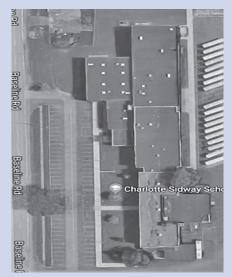
"For the last 50 years the baseball teams have lost many home games in the early weeks of the season due to wet grounds and lately our softball teams have experienced similar issues at Veterans Park with rainy spring seasons. A multi-sport turf complex for baseball, softball and lacrosse in the spring alone will let us play all our home games as scheduled and increase our home games by hosting other schools with wet fields. With the flexibility of the lights, we could play lacrosse, softball and baseball all in one day."

- Jon Roth. **GICSD Athletic Director**



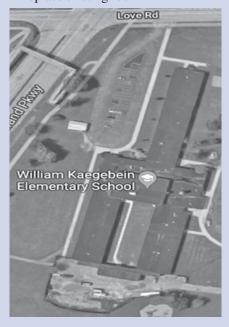
Charlotte Sidway Elementary - Renovations

- Roof replacement and associated work
- Provide A/C to cafeteria



William Kaegebein Elementary - Renovations

• Replace existing roof



Huth Rd Elementary - Renovations

- Kitchen renovation
- Replace theatrical lighting at the auditorium
- · Replace auditorium seating
- Provide A/C to auditorium

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the District having a bond vote?

Grand Island Schools is committed to providing a safe learning environment and well-maintained facilities for students and public use. Just as one's home ages and needs upkeep and repairs to keep it in good shape, so do our schools.

Many routine repairs and projects are funded within the annual District budget, with local taxpayers bearing the full cost. Large repairs and maintenance items, such as those included in this project, would have a major impact on the tax rate if included in the annual District budget. A bond issue is a fiscally responsible alternative because the State reimburses 73.9% of the eligible cost and the expense is spread out over a longer period of time.

How were the project's components chosen?

The basis for the project components are derived from the Building Condition Survey, a thorough inspection of all occupied school buildings to assess the current conditions of all program spaces in addition to major building systems and their components. All public school districts in New York are required by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) to complete a Building Condition Survey (BCS) for occupied public school buildings every five years. Shawn Wright of Young and Wright Architecture presented the results of the BCS to the Board of Education in May 2017. A facilities committee, consisting of three Board of Education members, community members, District administrators, teachers and staff, began to meeting in October 2017 to further examine the needs and discuss potential solutions. Over a 10-month period the committee further defined and prioritized the structural, health and safety needs identified in the BCS for our buildings and our athletic fields to include project components that addressed safety and security, health and welfare, maintenance and program improvements.

This scope-definition process resulted in defining between \$22-25 million in structural, health, safety and educational needs throughout the entire District.

The Grand Island Board of Education approved on Nov. 19, 2018 to move forward with the \$24,149,626 capital project.

When will the work take place?

It is expected that the State Education Department's approval for the project will be received by late 2019 with the bulk of work starting in spring/summer 2020. It is anticipated that the project would be complete in 2021.

What is the cost of the proposed project and how will it affect my taxes?

The cost of the proposed project is \$24,149,626. The local share of the project is 10% of the overall project cost. The estimated average annual tax impact is roughly \$15.95 on a home assessed at \$180,000.

Isn't the 73.9% State Aid just my tax dollars too?

Yes, it is. The New York State Legislature has given all Districts in the state an opportunity to use tax dollars to enhance their communities through school building improvements and renovations. This is an opportunity to keep some of those tax dollars in our own community, working to improve the educational setting for our children and the public.

What if the referendum does not pass?

The building maintenance and restoration items are included in the project as response to the State-mandated Building Conditions Survey. Most are therefore considered to be necessary and would still have to be completed. The facilities committee would have to reconvene and revise the project scope taking into consideration the feedback provided after the capital project vote. If for some reason this work is performed outside of a capital project, it would be completed without the benefit of the State's aid, with local taxpayers bearing the full cost.

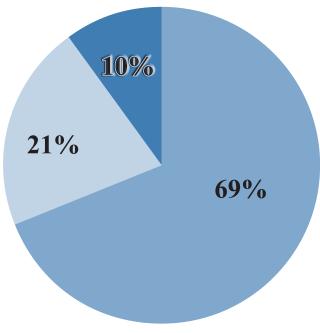






Proposition - \$24,149,626

Project Financing



- State Aid
- District Funds (Capital Reserve and Transfer to Capital)
- Local Share

2019 Capital Improvement Project - Average Tax Rate Impact per Household	
Project Referendum Amount	\$24,149,626
Average Annual Tax Impact	\$15.95

Proposition - \$24,149,626

RESOLVED, that (a) the Board of Education (the "Board") of the Grand Island Central School District, Erie County, New York (the "District") is hereby authorized to undertake a Capital Improvements Project, 2019 (the "Project") consisting of the reconstruction and renovation of, and the construction of improvements, additions and upgrades to, various District buildings and facilities (and the sites thereof), to implement various health, safety, accessibility and Code compliance measures and various other measures that are included and generally described in (but are not to be limited by) the Project Plan that was referred to in the public notice of the vote on this Proposition, and to expend therefor2 an amount not to exceed \$24,149,626; (b) the Board is hereby authorized to expend or apply toward the Project the entire balance (which stood at approximately \$404,748 as of November 13, 2018), plus any additional interest earned, from the District's Capital Reserve Fund, 2008; (c) the Board is hereby authorized to expend or apply toward the Project \$5,545,140 of other available District funds; (d) a tax is hereby voted in an amount not to exceed \$18,199,738 to finance the balance of the estimated maximum cost of the Project, such tax to be levied and collected in installments in such years and in such amounts as shall be determined by the Board; (e) in anticipation of such tax, obligations of the District are hereby authorized to be issued in the aggregate principal amount of not to exceed \$18,199,738, and a tax is hereby voted to pay the interest on such obligations as the same shall become due and payable; and (f) New York State Building Aid funds (including EXCEL Aid funds) expected to be received by the District are anticipated to offset a substantial part of such costs, and such funds, to the extent received, shall be applied to offset and reduce the amount of taxes herein authorized to be levied.

Projected Tax Impact

Local share of the project is \$181,372 annually over 15 years.

On a home assessed at \$180,000, the projected tax increase would be \$15.95.

The projected tax increase was calculated using a home assessed valuation of \$180,000. The tax rate information provided in the May 20, 2018 Bridge publication was used to calculate the projected tax increase and also includes the Basic STAR rebate.

Stay Informed!

Ask a Board of Education Member or Superintendent

- President Ashli Dreher, ashlidreher@gicsd.org
- Vice President Susan Marston, susanmarston@gicsd.org
- Superintendent Dr. Brian Graham, briangraham@gicsd.org
- Visit the FAQ webpage at grandislandschools.org

Save the Date! Grand Island Schools 2019 Capital Project Vote

Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2019

10 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Grand Island High School Foyer

1100 Ransom Road

Voter Identification Required (no pre-registration required)





Kaegebein Honors Vets with Poppies

Students at Kaegebein honored U.S. Veterans with a display of poppy paintings to symbolize remembrance. Pictured are Abby Toth and Brady Shearer who helped hang the display.

VCMS Makes Treats, Cards for Honor Flight Vets

Veronica E. Connor Middle School students led by their teacher, Mary Jane Fonte, made mini banana breads wrapped with patriotic ribbons to be donated to the Veterans who will be flying to Washington, D.C. as honored guests of Buffalo Niagara Honor Flight. The treats were given to the Veterans attending a Meet and Greet event. Letters and cards written by students from Grand Island High School, Kaegebein and Huth Road Elementary will be given to the Honor Flight Veterans during a dinner reception in Arlington, Va. These acts of gratitude toward America's heroes sustains a long history of Grand Island students showing Veterans respect and appreciation.

Stay Connected Through Twitter!



Honoring Our G.I. Veterans with a Parade

In the Corrao family, there is so much pride for the service 88-year-old John Corrao III gave his country as an Air Force staff sergeant. His grandchildren and greatgrandchildren have heard his stories from his time of service in Korea, Japan and Niagara Falls.

On Friday, Nov. 9, his grandson, Jacob Corrao, and his great-grandchildren, Nick Karnath and Gianna Karnath, showed how much he means to them by marching with him in the annual indoor Veteran's Day



parade at Grand Island High School and Veronica E. Connor Middle School

"Whenever I go to my Poppa's house, he always tells his stories. It's one of my favorite things to do, especially on Veterans day. We go there and eat lunch with him," said Jacob, a senior at GIHS.

"He served our world and it's important to tell people about it," said Gianna, a seventh-grader at VCMS. "He's one of the reasons that America is still safe and free."

Corrao served in the Korean War as a staff sergeant, determining what supplies the planes should bring over to Korea from Japan. He flew with the pilots to Seoul. "K16 they called it. Spent a year and a half in Japan and Korea. Came back to the Niagara Falls Air Base with the 47th interceptor squadron, looking for planes that were not supposed to be in the area," he said

He had an opportunity to earn his third stripe as a tech sergeant and be transferred to Hawaii. "That was tempting but by that time I had met a young lady that I thought I might be marrying, so I turned it down," said John, who has been married for 62 years.

"We're here today. Me and my family, all my other cousins, my mom, would not be here without him. That turn down on Hawaii was probably the right decision," said great-grandson Nick Karnath, a freshman at GIHS.

Corrao was one of 30 U.S. Veterans from the Grand Island community who were honored at the second annual indoor parade. Middle and High School students and staff lined the hallways, holding mini-U.S. flags, cheering, clapping and saying thank you, as veterans from the Grand Island American Legion Post 1346 and Charles N. DeGlopper VFW Post 9249 filed by.

"We are very proud of our U.S. Veterans and the service they gave to our country. We wanted to honor them in a very personal way by inviting them to our buildings," said Dr. Brian Graham, superintendent of Grand Island Central School District.

The parade route ended in the high school cafeteria with a breakfast prepared by district food service staff and patriotic songs performed by the high school chorus ensemble.







Seeing Grand Island's Creatures and Habitat at Eco Island

There is so much for students to see at Eco Island and the school year started off with plenty of classroom visits. Janelle Krupp's first-grade class from Charlotte Sidway Elementary School visited Eco Island to study the signs of fall. Students took a nature hike and observed how different trees have different shaped leaves. They also learned why leaves change color in the fall and how plants make seeds in the fall. It was a bright sunny day for Mrs. Krupp's class when they visited. Students made leaf rubbings of all the leaves they found on their

During their visit they were able to use some of the hand-painted chairs made by Julie Klein and Emily Cirincione-Prawel, both 2017 graduates. They donated their time to paint seven chairs that are in the bird section of Eco Island. Each chair illustrates a nest and a bird that is found on Grand Island. Pictured is Julie Klein with the chairs.





Two Receive Commendation Letters

Two Grand Island High School seniors, Grace LoHouse and Christian Whetham, have been named Commended Students in the 2019 National Merit Scholarship Program. They are pictured with high school principal Michael Lauria. LoHouse and Whetham are among 34,000 commended students recognized for their exceptional academic promise. They placed among the top 50,000 scorers of more than 1.6 million students.



GIHS Shared Decision Making Team

Grand Island Senior High School's Shared Decision Making Team is proud to report continued success in the 2018-2019 school year. The team is composed of administrators. teachers, parents, school related personnel, students and community representatives and is led by High School Assistant Principal Robert Julian. During their monthly meetings, team members have an opportunity to review current initiatives, propose ideas, study relevant school data and statistics, and share success stories. As a result of these conversations, the team decided to focus their efforts upon the following initiatives: minimum enrollment requirements; eligibility for participation in high school extracurricular activities and athletics; and school beautification. Additionally, the team looks to partner with members of the community and over the last year has been supported by the PTSA, school and District leadership, faculty members, and students. If you are interested in becoming a member of the High School's Shared Decision Making Team, please contact Mr. Julian at (716) 773-8820.

Meet Rubie Harris

In August, Dr. Rubie Harris began work as the Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance with Grand Island Central School District. The Bridge asked her a few questions as a way to introduce her.



In what school districts have you worked? I began my career 8-1/2 years ago as the Junior Accountant at Niagara Falls City School Districts. In July of 2014 I received the position as Director of Business and Finance with Tonawanda City School District, and was with the district for four years before becoming appointed as the Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance with Grand Island Central School District.

What were some of the larger projects you helped move forward at those districts? I assisted with a possible consolidation at my last school district, introduced capital outlay projects, navigated a negative tax cap situation, worked with legislation to spread out a late filing penalty for an old capital project, worked to receive bullet aid for multiple endeavors, refunded debt and many other projects.

What's your educational background? I have my MBA in Accounting (2009). I completed my School District Business Leader Certification (2014) and completed my Ph.D. In Leadership and Policy (2017). I aspire to achieve my Administrator of School Finance and Operations which is a national certification through ASBO International.

What are you looking forward to at Grand Island? Truly becoming a Viking. Learning the community, district, culture and providing all I can to assist in identifying, prioritizing and growing the district.

How would you describe your first months with the district? Welcoming! With beginning my position a week before the school year started, it can be chaotic. The central office and administrators were very welcoming, taking time to catch me up to speed on the multiple initiatives and providing support throughout the process.





Popped Ears of Corn Delight at Kaegebein

Each spring, with the help of Janet Gorfien, Mrs. McDonald's fourth graders plant the crops that the Iroquois called The Three Sisters (corn, beans and squash) in one of the garden beds in the Kaegebein garden. In the fall her new class gets to harvest those crops. The corn crop was very successful this year. After the class picked the ears off the stalks, they husked them. Then they set them out to dry. Once the corn had dried, each ear was put into a paper bag and popped in the microwave. The students were amazed and delighted. They are looking forward to planting more corn, as well as beans and squash, for next year's class to enjoy.

Riding a Fire Truck to School

Charlotte Sidway Elementary students got a special ride to their school on one of the Grand Island Fire Company trucks. All students learned about fire safety recently. Pictured (I to r) are Grand Island firefighters, students Noah Piurek, Noah Dewey, Natalie Grabek, Chloe Frasier, Cameron Duscher, Joshua Inglesbe, Mason Donahue, Brice Herrmann, Grand Island firefighters, and Sidway Principal Denise Dunbar



Huth Students Hit the Books Over

Summer

Over the summer, over 200 Huth Road Elementary students spent lots of time reading! The summer reading program helps students maintain their skills. In order to participate, students entering grades 3 through 5 read three books and wrote a short book talk about one of the books they read. Our younger students entering second grade participated by reading six books. The students who



brought back their summer reading program forms were invited to a celebration where they played bingo, won prizes and were treated to Rice Krispy treats purchased by our PTA. Studies show that summer reading programs enhance student achievement and help students to avoid the "summer slide" in reading skills.

Neighbors Foundation Provides Food Throughout Year

Grand Island Schools has a close partnership with the Neighbors Foundation of Grand Island, especially during the Holiday Food Distribution, but the Foundation provides assistance to families throughout the year. For temporary assistance, call the Foundation at 773-1452 or 773-7476. All inquiries are confidential. The Foundation provides confidential emergency assistance, primarily food, for Grand Island residents who find themselves in temporary need. The Foundation is a volunteer organization, using churches and other organizations to collect and stock an immediate needs food pantry, and raising money through community-wide fund drives.

Chromebooks, Google and Bears...Oh My!

Three Veronica E. Connor Middle School sixth-grade classes were the first to study a new curriculum under the Career and Technical Education program formerly known as Family and Consumer Science.

While sewing is still part of the skills they practice and learn, a technical component was added into the sewing unit. The Kiwi Crate Company Teddy Bear project involved sewing a circuit with conductive thread onto a circuit card so that when a connection is made, a red LED light turned on the bear's "heart."



Other units studied were Chromebook Use Rules and Skills, Internet Safety, Digital Citizenship, Origins of the Internet, Internet vs. the World Wide Web, Cloud Computing with Grand Island School District Google accounts, Google Classroom, Google Docs/Slides, E-Mail Etiquette and some coding tutorials/projects through the use of an online program called Scratch. Everything we have done is stored in their cloud and Scratch accounts, so parents can check out your tech savvy students' work anytime!



DECA Updates

Three Grand Island High School DECA students who opened Casey's Cabana were featured in a national DECA publication. Gabby Bergstrom, Luke Hess and Lauren Merletti received national recognition in the September-October issue of DECA



Direct magazine. You can read the article at https://issuu.com/decainc/docs/sep-oct_18.

Over 50 new members were inducted into the Grand Island DECA chapter. The induction was conducted by Faith Gworek, regional representative and assisted by, Emily Kurtzhalts, chapter president. DECA is a co-curricular and nationally renowned business club. Club advisors are Mary Jane Fonte at Veronica Connor Middle School and Cheryl Chamberlain at Grand Island High School.

Twelve JV DECA students qualified for state competition after developing and presenting an innovative product plan at the sixth annual mini-regional JV DECA competition. Veronica E. Connor Middle School students Nathaniel Cohen, Andrew Burke, Michael Christensen, Jackson Frey, Phillip Lepine, Patrick Whalen, Elizabeth Carpenter, Wynonna Roberts, Kathleen Krawczyk, Ella Rudney, Lindsey Olendorf and Megan Pinzel qualified for DECA state competition in Rochester should they wish to write their presentations up into a tenpage manual and attend the three-day conference. The student teams met to hone marketing and public speaking skills that few students their age have developed. Teams made a tri-fold presentation poster about an innovative product or service which identified three problems the product or service addressed, described the target customer base, explained the single reason the product is unique and its three top features.



The Huth Road Elementary PTA was named a 2018-2020 National PTA School of Excellence for strengthening its communication with families and implementing an action plan for school improvement based on PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships.

Huth was one of 19 within New York State to earn the two-year designation.

National PTA School of Excellence is a recognition program that supports and celebrates partnerships between PTAs and schools to enrich the educational experience and overall well-being for all students. Schools work to meet standards such as welcoming all families into the school community, communicating effectively, supporting student success, speaking up for every child, sharing power, and collaborating with community.

Among the successes Huth submitted for the award:

- Increase of 315% in communication as responses for feedback via the National School of Excellence survey jumped dramatically. Requests for feedback was met with responses from teachers, parents, and other members of the community at large.
- Multi-language signage throughout the building on welcome signs, requests to have photo ID ready, and information regarding dismissal procedures were translated into nine languages (other than English) spoken by families at Huth including Cantonese, Mandarin, Japanese, Tagalog, Punjabi, Urdu, Arabic, Polish, and Greek.
- Student-created videos for parent-teacher conferences were done in a second-grade classroom to help generate a conversation during the conference.
- A special event with a psychologist guest speaker who presented to parents, school administration/faculty/staff, and community members.

As part of the PTA Excellence Award, Huth Road made a pledge to participate in the "Start with Hello" campaign in September. The "Start with Hello" campaign is a national effort that teaches students the skills they need to reach out to others who might feel socially isolated and create a culture of empathy, inclusion and connectedness within their school. To kick off the campaign at Huth, for one week in September, the new Student Ambassadors wrote and read advice about kindness on morning announcements. Huth Road Elementary Principal Dr. Ami Alderman expanded on the message with a daily challenge for the building.





French Students **Enjoy Painting like** Monet

The Grand Island High School students in Susan MacPherson's College French class recently learned firsthand how to paint like the Impressionist artists of the 19th century. The juniors studied in detail the lives and art of several impressionist painters. They created and presented projects to the class using Google slides. The students worked closely with art teacher Mrs. Gaiek who taught them the techniques necessary to paint like these artists. Each student painted his own version of Monet's painting of the Water Lily Pond. This unique collaboration between the language and art departments created some wonderful masterpieces.





VMCS Helps N.C. Students

Autumn brought almost daily wind and rain to Grand Island, but nothing like what the children of Wilmington, N.C. had to face during Hurricanes Florence and Michael. When GICSD retiree Sue Carter, who relocated to Wilmington, brought the devastation of Mary C. Williams Elementary School to our attention, the staff and students of Veronica E. Connor Middle School responded to her plea. At Carter's suggestion, gently used clothing was collected and dropped off at Student Services. Fahim Mojawalla of the Island Ship Center graciously offered to ship at cost to the hurricane stricken area. Pictured with Fahim are the managers and controllers of the Family and Consumer Science entrepreneurs who generously donated their profits from sale of cookie pizza, dirt cups and Oreo truffles to add to the postage fund.



Halloween STEAM Stations

The classes of Mr. Lipinczyk, Mrs. Jank, Mrs. Nesselbeck, Mrs. Pfeil and Mrs. Higgins joined forces for Halloween STEAM fun where students rotated through different stations creating and applying thinking skills and strategies. From creating catapults and optical illusions to measuring pumpkins, students were busy applying STEAM strategies and thinking. All while enjoying and showing off some fun and creative Halloween costumes!





History Comes to Life at Fort Niagara

As an extension of their social studies curriculum, fourth graders at Huth Road Elementary saw history come to life during their annual field trip to Fort Niagara in the fall. As they toured the buildings at the Fort, guides shared with them many interesting stories of the conditions for soldiers and others based at the Fort during battle. Students especially enjoyed the cannon demonstration!

Pumpkin Math at Kaegebein

Carving up a pumpkin to learn math was one of the fall activities in Mrs. Aldridge's second grade class at Kaegebein Elementary.

The students were grouped with parent volunteers to estimate the number of seeds in their pumpkin, the weight of their pumpkin, and the circumference of their pumpkin. After their estimates were made, the students calculated the actual number of seeds, weight, and circumference of their pumpkin using different measuring tools. At the end of the activity, the class was excited to learn that one of the pumpkins had over 900 seeds! The students had a fabulous learning experience with this hands-on math activity and learn even more about pumpkins.



Collaborative Mural Started with a Dot

The first collaborative artwork, based on the children's book "The Dot" by Peter H. Reynolds, is gracing the hallway at Kaegebein Elementary. The art piece includes text from the book's story of a young female artist who was inspired by her art teacher to start drawing with just a dot and her signature. In the book, the young girl then inspires other young artists. The message of the dot is to inspire creativity with creativity and the cycle of inspiration will go on and on, just like the shape of the dot. Each student created one dot which was then quartered and paired with other dots to show how creativity can grow and inspire collaboration.





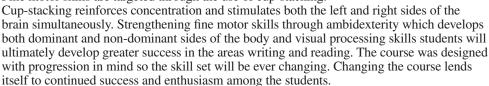


Hopping Along Kaegebein's New Kangaroo Motor Course

Little do the students know that the new Kangaroo Motor Course at Kaegebein is helping them become better students. All they know is that it's fun, gets them up moving and provides a physical challenge to offset the mental challenges of schoolwork

Two teachers, Jennifer Marsala and Valerie Parillo, developed the gross motor course to enhance locomotor and fine motor skills while reinforcing motor planning, balance, and coordination. The course was designed to include several key gross motor skills. Gross motor skills are important to enable students to perform everyday tasks like walking, jumping, skipping and self-care skills like dressing and being able to stand on one leg. These skills directly impact a child's endurance to cope with a full day of school where they sit upright at a desk, move between classrooms and carry a heavy backpack.

The layout of the course is specific and each pattern of movement facilitates a multi-sensory output. When students' brains are engaged in dynamic movement, thought processing is enhanced. This enhancement not only benefits academica but a multi-sport approach. This course positively impacts a student's full potential by incorporating a fine motor element. Fine motor skills are targeted through the use of cup-stacking.







Grandparents Head to School

Charlotte Sidway Elementary's annual Grandparent's Day was a time for special guests to visit the school. Each day during one week, four to five classes welcomed grandparents or a special person to visit for the afternoon. Grandparents and students read books together, played games and enjoyed a snack. Students were able to give their special guest a tour of their classroom. Pictured are Cecelia Santiago with her grandmother Nancy Heftka.



Halloween Safety From the District SROs



The district's two school resource officers, Michael Paternostro and Frank McNamara, visited elementary classrooms before Halloween to share safety information and to read to students. Pictured sharing trick or treating safety tips with second-graders at Kaegebein in the class of Miss Santospirito and Mr. Gerster is SRO Mike Paternostro.

What's a Tinker

Space?

Kindergarten and firstgraders at Charlotte Sidway Elementary have a new area to create,



build, and explore when they attend library. A new, dynamic Tinker Space has been created in the library for students to gets hands-on with creative projects that will bring basic math, science and engineering concepts to life. Tinker Spaces can also be referred to as Maker Spaces and STEM or STEAM rooms. Students will visit the Tinker Space each week as part of their library rotation. In this space students are invited to tinker, experiment, build, take apart, investigate and create. The students rotate through stations such as giant legos, magnets, pegs, playdoh, an art station and many more.

Tinker Spaces require a diverse supply of materials. Donations are being accepted of many common household items that you may not even think are useful. Donations can be brought to the office. Items include but are not limited to yarn, tape, scissors, old tools that are safe for children, paper plates, pipe cleaners, kitchen utensils, tooth picks, paper cups, wooden craft sticks, Legos, twist ties, markers.

Huth Road Safety Patrol

Officer Pyc joined Huth Road Co-Chairs, Mrs. Cassata and Mrs. Tewsley, to swear-in the Safety Patrol members. Members all have posts around the building to ensure that all children are demonstrating the Viking Values. We are very proud of our Safety Patrol members for the important work that they do.





Connor Café Gets the Morning Started!

Every Friday morning, the staff at Veronica E. Connor Middle School can get a fresh cup of fruit, a bagel, muffin or a snack for later in the day. Thanks to the students in the Life Skills Class of Tracy Shores, the Connor Cafe is run by her students to help get the day started for staff. Many students often stop by and make some purchases as well.

"We shop at Tops every Thursday for the food that we sell at Connor Café," said Mrs. Shores. "Then students come in Friday morning and work at their assigned jobs for the day."

Student jobs include the chefs, who slice and prepare the fresh fruit cups, a greeter who welcomes all of our customers, the cashier who manages the money, the stockers who set up all the food in the morning and keeps the area clean and the manager who takes special orders, manages the profits and makes sure all "employees" have what they need.







VCMS Chess Club Hosts 60 Students at Tournament

The VCMS Chess Club was busy with competitions this fall. Special congratulations goes out to Tanner Hawley, Abi Selvakumar, and John Paul Szczublewski for taking second place in the rated section at the Fall Scholastic Chess Tournament. We also congratulate Matthew Burridge, Jierui Jiao, and Asher Wright for taking third place in the unrated section. John Paul Szczublewski also took second place individually and overall in the rated section. So proud of our VCMS Chess Club players, especially when the other teams had four players that counted toward their team totals and we only had three players on each of our teams. The VCMS Chess Club also hosted over 60 students from various schools at the second annual WNY Halloween Scholastic Chess Tournament. The club will host the WNY Valentine's Scholastic Chess Tournament in February 2019.





Parent University Shares Strategies

Charlotte Sidway Elementary School held its Parent University to engage parents in learning activities and strategies for helping their child in a variety of circumstances. Joe Clem, a licensed family therapist and board certified behavior analyst, presented a program for parents on reducing anxiety in children and building mental health. Activities were provided for children and many informational booths were available for parents to visit.

Emptying a Piggbybank for Sidway

Playground

First-grader Kelsey Hall emptied her piggy bank to donate to the Sidway playground fundraising efforts. She had seen the gauge of how much is left to raise and wanted to help. Sidway families have been helping to raise enough funds to build a new playground on the existing footprint of the 21-year-old playground. The outpouring of students wanting to help has been impressive. The generosity of the community has been amazing.



Time Capsule, 1960s Clothing and Video Remembrances Help **Celebrate VCMS 50th Anniversary**

Sixth, seventh and eighth graders at Veronica E. Connor Middle School get the chance all year long to keep learning what school was like 50 years ago, as the building celebrates its golden anniversary. Opened in the 1968-69 school year as Grand Island Middle School, it became known as Veronica E. Connor Middle School in December of 1996, named after Miss Connor, the popular superintendent who was instrumental in moving the Grand Island schools from one-room school houses to larger schools. At its opening, the middle school housed 1,000 students in grades 7 and 8.

In a ceremony on Sept. 17, the district celebrated the 50th anniversary with a program to highlight the history and culture of 1968, as well as 1993 when the school celebrated its 25th anniversary. Throughout this school year, various activities will be held to keep the celebration alive.





The 25-year-old time capsule of 1993 was opened during the Sept. 17 ceremony and another time capsule was started that contained a fidget spinner, a Viking value t-shirt, Haan craft sewing project and many more school items. It will hang from the library ceiling and be opened in the 2043-2044 school year.

The anniversary assembly also included a video clip of what life was like in 1968, a1968 dance performed by faculty, video clip of Veronica E. Connor at the building naming ceremony in December 1996 and photo slide shows.

Celebrating 50 Years Through Art

In honor of the middle school's golden anniversary, students have been learning through art what life was like in the 1960s. Students have studied Pop-Art and the poster designs of graphic artists, Peter Max and Milton Glaser. After learning about this distinctive and colorful art style, eighth grade artists created their own 1968-style "selfiedesign" posters. The lesson helped students understand the role that visual art plays in understanding different time periods and places. Pictured, eighth-grade student Natalyn Cordero proudly displays her self-portrait, showing how she might have appeared in poster form had she been a student at VCMS 50 years ago.



VCMS MakerSpace **Extends STEM** Activities

Trying to design an electric paper airplane that will fly for 30 seconds with a 20-second charge was the Makerspace challenge put before middle school students in September. As part of the Makerspace at Veronica E. Connor Middle School library, the task was fun, challenging and went right along with the science and engineering topics taught in class.

October's challenge was to create and decorate a mini directional VibroBot Critter using an Eccentric Rotating Mass (or ERM) motor that can shake or vibrate.

The Makerspace is available any time during the school day. Students may come down from their study hall or lunch. The space is open during the day and afterschool only when the monthly challenges are held.

Mary Howard, a sixth-grade ELA and science teacher, develops the projects. They are tested by Sharyn Mudd, the middle school librarian, who is then able to assist students during the day.







Mulan, Jr. Hits the Stage

More than 73 talented kids at VCMS made up the cast and crew for the October performances of Mulan, Jr.



Huth Road Elementary Turns 60

Huth Road Elementary School opened its doors in 1958. In early December, staff and students honored the building's 60th anniversary with an assembly during the day and an afternoon reception for invited guests.

During the day, the student assembly featured the band playing music through various decades from the 1950s to now. The fifth-grade chorus presented a brand new verse of the Huth Road Memories song, adding a sixth verse to the tune which was written for the 50th anniversary. The select chorus also performed. A 60th anniversary photo was unveiled.

Principal Dr. Ami Alderman purchased a time capsule from 1958 which contained items from that era. Many of the items such as Lego blocks and Slinkys have stood the test of time. To commemorate 60 years, several of the items from the 1958 time capsule will be placed back into it and new items were added including a USB with messages from current students and staff.

During the day, students watched a commemorative slide show presentation from their classrooms.

Teacher Attends Washington, D.C. Conference

Dawn Hayes, an eighth-grade social studies teacher at Veronica E. Connor Middle School, was selected through a competitive process as one of five Western New York area teachers to attend The Richard and Roberta Handel Educator's Conference in Washington D.C. Ms. Hayes is pictured second from right.

The Educator's Conference, sponsored by the Holocaust Resource Center of Buffalo, allowed participants to tour and receive educational materials from three organizations dedicated to promoting peace: The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), the Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights, as well as the United States Institute for Peace. Ms. Hayes experienced two exciting and very busy conference days attending various presentations intended to provide an in-depth understanding of the background to the Holocaust and its connection to issues impacting our world today. She learned techniques for conflict resolution and teaching human rights.

Throughout history, education has often proven to be a first-line of defense against the rise of hate, violence, and extremism. "Today, through the efforts of the dedicated teachers who participated, The Richard and Roberta Handel Educators Conference and students across Western New York will be one step closer to becoming part of the solution to world problems," said Ms. Hayes.



Tales for Tots Entertains

GIHS Spotlighters staged another successful Tales for Tots during the first weekend in November. Seniors Sara Gorton, Shandi Putzbach and Enrico Capone adapted and directed the Tales which were enjoyed by Sidway's first grade classes along with many audience members from the community.

GIHS Grab & Go Breakfast Nook Opens

No time for breakfast at home or running a little late? The High School is now offering a Grab & Go Breakfast each morning located in the Viking Mall. Instead of a traditional cafeteria service, Grab 'n' Go breakfast service brings breakfasts to the students, making it easier for them to eat breakfast at school. Grab 'n' Go allows students the flexibility and choice to eat breakfast where and when they want.



"Into the Woods" Performances Jan. 31, Feb. 1-2

Students of Grand Island Senior High School will perform this year's winter musical, "Into the Woods" on Thursday, Jan. 31; Friday, Feb. 1 and Saturday, Feb. 2, 2019 at 7 p.m. in the Grand Viking Theater, 1100 Ransom Road. Tickets are \$10 and will be available for purchase online at grandislandschools.org. "Into the Woods" is written by James Lapine with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim. The story follows a baker and his wife, who wish to have a child; Cinderella, who wishes to attend the King's Festival; and Jack, who wishes his cow would give milk. When the baker and his wife learn that they cannot have a child because of a witch's curse, the two set off on a journey to break the curse. Everyone's wish is granted, but the consequences of their actions return to haunt them later with disastrous results.

Seeking Volunteers, Participants in **Grades 8-12 for the TIES Program**

The TIES program (Together Including Every Student) gives students with developmental disabilities (ages 8-21) the opportunity to join extracurricular, community and recreational activities of their choice with support from trained student volunteers. TIES is an amazing opportunity for student volunteers and participants to develop friendships, skills and connections. Volunteers are students in grades 8-12 who receive training and an individual support plan that describes the participant's needs. Time commitment is based on the volunteer's schedule. Students can join after-school activities, lunchtime support, stage crew, school dances, drumming circles, sports, community programs, school of religion, scouts, etc. Questions or more information please contact Lisa Valle, TIES Coordinator at 716-984-4847 or email at vallebug@aol.com.

Counseling Center Brings College Reps to GIHS

College representatives filled the Grand Island High School cafeteria for the Fall 2018 College Consortium to meet with students who are interested in learning more about the colleges and the programs they offer. Colleges present included University at Buffalo, Daemen College, Niagara County Community College, Buffalo State College, D'Youville College, Niagara University, SUNY College at Fredonia, Erie Community College, St. Bonaventure University, Alfred State College, Genesee Community College, Trocaire College, Alfred University, Hilbert College, Villa Maria College, Bryant & Stratton, Houghton College, Jamestown Community College, Canisius College and Medaille College. Thanks to the GIHS counseling center for arranging this program!



Honor Society Students Helping **Others**

Grand Island High School National Honor Society students went to the Buffalo Dream Center warehouse on Masten Avenue in December and helped to bag groceries for families in the community. The students, along with other volunteers, helped assemble 3,005 bags. Pictured back row (1 to r) Grace LoHouse, Laura Schultz, Nick Carey, Natalie Turck, Dylan Russo, Ryan Wellence. Front row, Lexie Diaz, Emily Kurtzhalts, Jordan Pachla, Allison Fluker, Lindsay Robinson, Rhys







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The GIHS Girls cross country team ran their way to a Section B1 championship on Nov. 2. The harriers defeated West Seneca East by one point to earn their first blue patch since 2009!

Holiday Lights

Kaegebein Elementary School participated in the Light Up the Boulevard Parade. Thank you to everyone who crafted, helped to assemble the truck and walked in the parade.



Recapping a Fall Season of Viking **Athletics Successes**

The Grand Island Vikings wrapped up the fall season with some outstanding team and individual performances. The varsity football team won the Class A2 championship with standouts Cam Sionko at quarterback, Justin Gorrell and Ben Moskala at wide-receiver, and Kenny Yockey and Liam Hart at linebacker. The girls varsity soccer team capped their season with an NFL Championship. Leading scorers were Brooke Amato and Eve DiCarlo with Alexa Chiarenza and Julia Echiel defending in the back. The girls cross country team captured the Section VI B1 championship with lead runners Faith Caldwell and Riley Joseph. The boys varsity volleyball team also claimed a Section VI championship as they beat the boys from Hamburg. Lead attackers were Billy Weiberg, Zach Cramer and Tom Shemik. Outstanding individual performers in tennis included Kierstin Brown, who tied for second in the NFL, finished third in Section VI competition, and finished 1-1 in the state championships. Kiersten is Grand Island's first Singles NY State competitor. Brook Eichel and Lexi Diaz were both NFL champions in swimming with Brook winning the diving title and Lexi placing first in both the individual medley and the butterfly. In golf, Wyatt Tollner was named State Qualifying Alternate for the spring championships.

Check out the upcoming winter sports schedule at grandislandschools.org.

Overall Fall Record by Sport:

Football: Varsity 7-2 Division Champs; JV 7-1; Modified 6-1

Girls Soccer: Varsity 15-4 NFL Champs; JV 15-1

Boys Soccer: Varsity 8-11; JV 13-3

Girls Volleyball: Varsity 14-6; JV 15-3; Modified 10-3

Boys Volleyball: Varsity 14-3 Sectional Champs; JV 14-2; Modified 8-3

Girls Tennis: Varsity 10-4 Girls Swimming: Varsity 6-8

Cross Country: Girls 9-7 Sectional Champs; Boys 8-8

Golf: 11-12

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