

Hyde Park Central School District Connections



March 2024

From the Desk of Dr. Pedro Roman

Dear Hyde Park Community,
As we approach the conclusion of this academic year, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to our entire community, the esteemed members of our Board of Education, and our dedicated faculty and staff. Your steadfast commitment to fostering a nurturing environment enriched with exceptional programs and services is instrumental in shaping the future of our district.

In this edition of Connections, you will discover exciting updates, including new course offerings designed to enrich the educational experience of our scholars, enhanced mental health services to support student well-being, and engaging curriculum enhancements such as Eureka Math². Furthermore, we are excited to share extended learning opportunities to hone essential 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, effective communication, and innovation for our students.

I extend my deepest gratitude to all those who contribute to realizing our collective vision. As we embrace the warmth of spring, I encourage each of you to enjoy the beauty of the season and seize the opportunities it brings forth.
Thank you for your unwavering dedication and support!



FDR set to offer new classes



FDR is looking to the future and will offer new classes for the 2024-2025 school year, some of which will teach students about a few trades which could lead them to more career opportunities once they finish high school.

The Fundamentals of Cabinetry and Cybersecurity are two of the offerings technology director Richard Wert predicts will appeal to hands-on learners and

students who plan to attend trade school, as opposed to college. Wert is supporting the classes when it comes to budgeting and materials. "I liked that they appealed to a broad range of students," Wert said of the new courses. "It is set to go for next year."

Here's a breakdown of the new courses:

Astronomy

Science teacher Michelle Murray has pushed for an astronomy course in years past and considers it a "gateway science" for students because they start to learn about life outside of planet Earth and it expands their scientific interests.

"They learn about the formation of stars, supernovas and what different planets are like," Murray explained. "It is a really good science to get kids who are maybe otherwise less engaged in science to be interested and ask those big questions."

Many students have asked about having an astronomy course. "I already have kids telling me as they're making their schedules for next year, 'I'm going to be in your astronomy class,'" Murray said.

The class will include discussions about astronauts going into space as well as hands-on lab activities which include crushing down balls of aluminum foil to see how close it can get to being the black hole. While it is geared towards students who have already completed two Regents exams, Murray welcomes all students to participate. She noted that this class is perfect for students who want to enter the STEM field.

Cabinetry

Technology teacher Chad McBroom will teach the Fundamentals of Cabinetry, a primarily hands-on class with the goal of students walking away with basic knowledge and practical skills needed to take on cabinetry projects with confidence. McBroom has polled his woodworking classes over the years and found that the majority of students wanted to study cabinetry.

"Students have been requesting more hands-on classes for years," McBroom said. "They can use what they've learned for personal use or as a stepping stone to entrepreneurship."

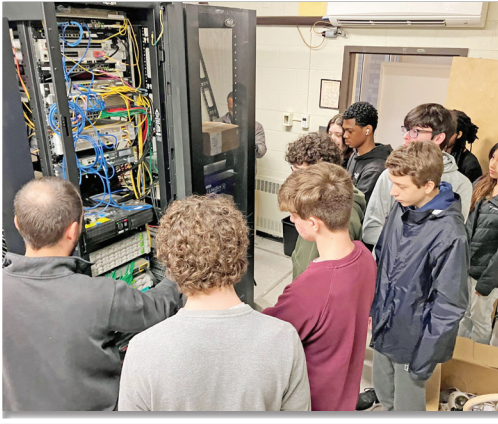
The course will focus on traditional kitchen-style cabinets during the first half.



...continued on pg 2

FDR set to offer new classes

...continued from pg 1



Cybersecurity

The year-long course, open to juniors and seniors, gives students a broad exposure to many aspects of digital and information security, while encouraging socially responsible choices and ethical behavior. Additionally, they will work on problem-based learning scenarios while role-playing and training as cybersecurity experts where being reactive is key.

“Our lives are so connected to the internet that we need to be protective of that,” technology teacher David Czechowski said. “Cybersecurity is the real deal.”

Many companies, including IBM, continue to need cybersecurity services and Czechowski said local job opportunities are endless, making this course very viable.

“Any company that has an online presence needs cybersecurity knowledge,” he said. “There’s great opportunities right here in our own backyard.” He added that students who graduate having taken the class will be better citizens as, “All people should have some cybersecurity awareness.”

Fitness, Weight Training and Lifetime Activities

This half-semester course will largely consist of juniors and seniors setting personal fitness goals in the school’s weight room. Students will also do fun activities such as bowling and badminton. Unlike other physical education courses that feature competitive team sports, this course puts less pressure on students, but still meets all requirements and teaches valuable life skills.

“This provides them with another opportunity,” athletic director Beth Fletcher said, adding, “The more that you expose students to, the more likely they are to find something they will stick with as far as health and fitness. Once kids realize what it is or that there are different options, it will gain some steam.”

Some of the biggest life skills students will gain from the course include goal setting, as well as creating a plan and sticking with it, something students will need no matter what career path they take. “You always want to set goals for yourself and achieve those goals,” Fletcher said. “It’s about teaching kids that process of ‘write it down, put it on paper.’”



Flags, cards available for May 25 Field of Honor

The 2024 Field of Honor© is scheduled for Saturday, May 25th (rain date 5/26). This fabulous display of over 250 flags located at the historic FDR Estate is also the annual fundraiser for the Hyde Park Education Foundation. All proceeds go to teacher grants and student scholarships.

Each year, flags are available for purchase for \$45 OR you can buy a dedication card for \$20. While you may have participated in the past, we hope that you choose to recognize a new individual who you think has contributed to the overall good of the community ... now or in the past. Flyers will be distributed to students and staff in the very near future or you may use the online order form on our website: <https://www.hydeparkeducationfoundation.org/donate>.



Grant recipients have helped to expand, enrich and/or enhance the education of students. To name a few: the fantastic HMS garden, the NES clean water project, the OWL’s nest at RRS, the Lion’s Den at NPE, ENL library at VAS, and digital pianos at NES and NPE, just to name some of the recent projects. We thank all the teachers who applied for and received HPEF grants! The new grant recipients for the 2024-2025 school year will be announced at this event.

The opening ceremony for the Field of Honor© begins at 10 a.m. and begins with taps, color guard and the national anthem. Come see our student performances and keynote speakers, story walk, and kid’s tent! Bring the family and enjoy your national park and the wonderful experience of the flag display. The event is free and open to all.

After school program keeps the learning going

North Park students are having an out of world experience learning about issues in space during the Extended Day Club Invention Program, where they enhance their academic skills and use their creativity with fun projects.

This program, which runs Mondays and Tuesdays, serves as a chance for expanding learning opportunities with STEM-based enrichment programs for students to brush up on their academics and learning loss. Additionally, they are also learning about social skills, how to work together effectively and solve problems. The spring session has 103 students, while the fall session had about 66.

There is always a theme to the activities, and this month students are learning about space. The activities and topics are modified for each grade level and students' level of understanding.

"There are five topic based sessions that allow students to explore and use their creativity to understand different aspects of space while problem-solving," program coordinator Arisa King said. "These skills include building tools for fixing a spaceship and creating communication devices to speak to the inhabitants of Planet ROG."

It is not all work however. When students first attend their assigned classroom they eat a snack and unwind from the school day before the fun starts. King hopes to see the program come back and she has students enjoy the program and its activities.

"Right now it is on a year to year basis," King said. "We would like to continue this program in the future."

Violet Avenue, Ralph R. Smith and Netherwood also host extended day programs that follow the same curriculum as North Park.



BRYT program proves beneficial for students

In close to three years, Hyde Park's Bridge for Resilient Youth in Transition, or BRYT, program has helped close to 180 students regulate their behavior which helps them at school and beyond.

With the support of a teacher's aide (TA) and social worker, this short-term intervention program teach elementary students, with varying needs, how to regulate their behavior, develop a positive behavior support plan while working with their families and outside agencies to ensure student success. Eighty one students currently use the services, while 98 have been given crisis intervention support, according to Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Services Melissa Lawson.

The assistance does not end at school, the student's TA and social worker assist outside of the classroom and set goals with them and their family to work toward a successful transition back to the classroom. "A key component of this program is that the

TA and social worker are in direct contact with the student, the student's teachers as well as the family," Lawson explained. "They work together to support the student in school and can line up resources to support the student outside of school as well."

"I will see them use the skills or they will tell me how they used the skills outside of the BRYT space."

Rita Benson
Behavioral Intervention TA

Students in BRYT learn coping skills, regulation strategies and how to build resiliency, all of which can be applied both in and out of the school environment. RRS Behavioral Intervention TA Rita Benson often hears from students she works with about how doing

something as simple as taking a breath rather than back sassing at another person has helped them get through the day successfully.

"It's a big growth for students," Benson said. "I will see them use the skills or they will tell me how they used the skills outside of the BRYT space." For middle and high schoolers, the program helps them transition back to school after a hospitalization or if they have been chronically absent due to a mental health concern. Both Haviland and FDR have a school social worker who provides oversight and coordination of BRYT. They currently support 21 students to develop a re-entry plan.

"They provide targeted counseling support to students who have experienced mental health challenges," Lawson said. "The program provides building based transition support, social emotional learning support, mental health support and academic support to our most vulnerable students."

BOARD of EDUCATION

Mike Zagorski- President
Michael Tibbetts- Vice President
Jesslyn Hollar- Board Member
Jessie Laguerre- Board Member
Margaret Qatani- Board Member
Edward Spence- Board Member
Carl Tomik- Board Member
Amanda Barrett- Student Member

SUPERINTENDENT of SCHOOLS

Dr. Pedro Roman

DISTRICT CLERK

Joanne "Jay" Mikula

HYDE PARK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administrative Offices
P O Box 2033
Hyde Park NY 12538
www.hpcsd.org • 845-229-4000
Fax (845)229-4056

Non Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Newburgh, NY
Permit No. 3809

ECRWSS

POSTAL CUSTOMER

Eureka Math² - an engaging education experience



language so students of all abilities can use it. Knisell noted that Eureka teaches students conceptual understanding, and features fine art components making math more comprehensible.

"This whole program, since it started, was really going into 'How do we do this?' and the why," Knisell explained. "There's a connection with art in math, they feature fine art at each grade level."

While HPCSD has used the Eureka Math program since 2012 for kindergarten through eighth grade students, district staff felt an upgrade was needed.

During the 2022-2023 school year, the district's math and science department surveyed teachers and found they were struggling with teaching too many lessons in a period as well as monitoring students' progress and a limited number of engaging materials for parents.

"They were struggling with some of our grade level fluency and assessing kids in math," math and science director Kim Knisell said. "There wasn't a lot to send home to communicate with parents."

Eureka Math² was implemented at the start of the 2023-2024 school year. It features digital components, a better pacing guide with fewer lessons to teach per period and easier to understand workbooks with pictures that students take home. Knisell noted it helps students and parents better understand it.

"There are model problems so parents can follow and help them," Knisell said regarding the new workbooks. "There is a lot of reading support in the program, a lot of the questions are more readable for kids."

The district is expanding math instruction through equity which includes making it more accessible with easier to understand

The district has brought in math coaches to support progress monitoring, analyzing data, occasionally co-teaching and planning classes with teachers and modeling lessons and strategies for them. They are participating in a study with Marist College to determine Eureka's effectiveness.

"A lot of their time has been spent helping teachers support the implementation of this new program," Knisell said of the coaches. "They provide a lot of professional development."

Students and teachers have also taken surveys about math and their experiences.

Knisell's goals are to improve academic achievement for kindergartners through eighth graders, so they can pass the Algebra 1 Regents and assure that teachers have the conceptual understanding of math so they can build it in students.

"If our elementary teachers don't have that deep understanding of math, it's hard to get our kids to it," Knisell said. "We want kids to be critical thinkers and problem solvers."

Lessons feature basic problems to start and get harder as the pages go on. Netherwood math teacher Bradford Leach finds the books work well with all students.

"The students who are struggling can work at their own pace, while the students who are more advanced can go through that

easier part and then get to more challenging things at the end," Leach said. The program's more interactive and hands-on materials help students learn math easier, Leach said. All lessons start with recaps of problems students have worked on previously. It also features fewer problems per page printed in big letters with vibrant colors.

"This is designed for them and right where they need to be," Leach explained. "The people who developed this definitely know something about child development."

Fourth grader Stella Lansing finds that the problems are much easier to follow than before with less steps to complete.

"It helps me visualize the problem more," Lansing said. "We would have to write the question down, now we just have to answer the question."

HAPPENINGS

April 8
NO SCHOOL

April 9 - May 17
NYS ELA Testing for 3rd - 8th Gr.

April 9
BOE Community Chat- at RRS Library:
8 - 9 p.m.

April 10
Family Awareness & Prevention Night at
Haviland: 6 - 8 p.m.

April 11
BOE Meeting at FDR: 7 p.m.
1st Violet Avenue PASE Night for Parent's,
6:30 p.m.

April 15
4th Quarter Begins for All Grades

April 19
2hr. Delay kindergarten through 12th Gr.