

Hyde Park Central School District Connections

February 2024

From the Desk of Dr. Pedro Roman

Dear Hyde Park Community,

There is much to celebrate in the month of February. First, on behalf of our Board of Education and our Administrative Team, I want to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to our incredible team of school counselors in recognition of School Counselor Week. Their dedication, empathy, and unwavering support make a profound difference in the lives of our students and our entire school community. Their guidance, encouragement, and listening ears provide invaluable support as our students navigate the challenges and triumphs of their academic, social, and personal journeys. Thank you for your tireless commitment to ensuring the well-being and success of every student.

As we reflect on the importance of safety within our school community, I also want to take a moment to express our deep appreciation for our School Resource Officers (SROs). In celebration of SRO Day, we extend our sincerest gratitude to these dedicated individuals who work tirelessly to ensure the safety of our schools and foster meaningful connections with our students, staff, and families. Their presence and commitment contribute significantly to the well-being and security of our learning environment, and for that, we are immensely grateful.

February also marks the celebration of Black History Month. This month provides us with a valuable opportunity to recognize and commemorate the countless contributions and

...continued on pg 2

CTI visit inspires and ignites FDR students' interest



FDR sophomores and their counselors toured Dutchess BOCES' Career & Technical Institute (CTI) on Feb. 2 to ponder the numerous trade programs it offers.

BOCES guidance counselors Kirstin Litwin and Deanna Pillius explained how students need to devote half a day of school to attend CTI, where they gain life and career experience, readiness for either college or career and a skillset, or range of abilities in a technical field that can be used professionally or personally. One of CTI's goals is for students to leave with a path and purpose. "You start out as a young person here and we move you toward becoming a young professional," Pillius explained. "You work with real tools, interact with real life customers, wear uniforms and safety gear, and practice shop safety and have more responsibility."

...continued on pg 3

Hyde Park CSD receives \$3.5 million grant

Hyde Park Central School District is the only Dutchess County school district to have been provisionally awarded a \$3.5 million Stronger Connections Grant from the New York State Education Department. The grant is to help expand safe, healthy and supportive learning opportunities and environments for students.

This competitive grant program, spread out over the course of three years, was authorized under the Bipartisan Safe Communities Act of 2022 and is also intended to prevent and respond to acts of bullying, violence and hate that impact school communities at individual and systemic levels. Hyde Park is one of 44

districts across the state to receive one. "When students feel secure, valued, and respected, they are more likely to actively engage in the learning process," NYSED Board of Regents Chancellor Lester W. Young, Jr. said

in a statement. "These grants will aid in our commitment to provide high-quality education to all students, regardless of race, disability status, or economic background."

Superintendent Dr. Pedro Roman and Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services Melissa

Lawson applied for the grant with the intent of providing wraparound supports for students in order for them to thrive.

"To determine what specific supports



...continued on pg 2

From the Desk of Dr. Pedro Roman

...continued from pg 1

achievements of African American individuals throughout history. From groundbreaking inventions to cultural advancements, the impact of Black leaders and innovators resonates deeply within our society. By honoring the past and embracing the present, we can collectively strive towards a future of equality, unity, and understanding.

Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership in creating a safe, inclusive, and enriching educational environment for all members of our Hyde Park community.

With Hyde Park Pride,



HPCSD receives \$3.5 million grant

...continued from pg 1

we need to close the opportunity and achievement gap, we will create a logic model and in parallel undergo a strategic planning process that engages our community in building a blueprint for our district's future," Roman said.

Some preliminary ideas include creating a safe environment where students are given opportunities for restorative practices, tackling chronic absenteeism with a goal of having students attend school 95 percent or more of the days school is in session, as well as challenging thriving students and supporting those who need a boost.

"We want all students in Hyde Park to succeed and thrive," Roman said. "When kids feel supported, when they feel they are valued and respected, they're going to be successful."

Roman and Lawson are grateful for the grant that will allow the district

to help close opportunity gaps for families by bringing in resources that will complement and expand the supports currently available to students.

"It will help us address the continued needs that have surfaced as a result of the pandemic."

Another aspect of the grant will be using the Community Schools model as a way to respond to the needs of the community. Lawson noted that liaisons will communicate directly with families and other residents.

"We look forward to having staff dedicated to serving our community in a new way. Our liaisons will serve as a support system for our students and families through community engagement, advocacy, effective communication and collaboration," Lawson said. Funds will be distributed pending approval from the State Education Department.

Hyde Park Loves the Bus



HPCSD's Assistant Supervisor of Transportation Nicole Arteta invites everyone to hop on board for a month-long celebration of some of the district's unsung heroes.

Held in February, Love the Bus Month is a nationwide campaign to show appreciation for school bus drivers, monitors, mechanics and transportation office support staff with a different activity or gesture every day honoring their dedication. These gestures have included thank you cards and a day of coffee and treats.

Arteta wanted to bring this celebration to Hyde Park for the whole month after seeing it be done at her previous district for only one day. "We can't get all the kids to school without everybody here playing their part," Arteta said. "It's nice to take a moment to let them know that we recognize that and we appreciate it."

Driver Rich Canero, whose route includes dropping off elementary, daycare and high school students, looked forward to the various events being planned. He appreciates having a month dedicated to all transportation staff.

"It's a great month to recognize everybody that does help in some capacity to get the kids to school safely," Canero said.

What keeps Canero in his role is the warm camaraderie he has with colleagues, the kids on his route and their families. He often fills in on other routes when needed.

"The smiles and the hugs are worth it," Canero said. "I love the job, I love the kids and I love the personnel in the office."

Bus monitor Sherri Gillen makes sure students behave so the bus driver

can concentrate. In her 13 years, she has built a rapport with families by informing them of two-hour delays and is fond of the students, sometimes reading books to them to keep them calm.

"Each little holiday I give the kids little treats and they give a big smile," Gillen said. "It's fun to be with the kids."

While Gillen gets showered with gifts from families during the holidays, she appreciates Love the Bus Month's message.

"It feels great," Gillen said. "Anytime you're recognized is a good thing." Mechanic Dony Cuomo had never heard of Love the Bus Month before, but appreciates being recognized for the work he does to make sure the buses are safe.

"It's a great thing that we get pinpointed out to be appreciated," Cuomo said. "We're kind of like the silent people in the back."

CTI visit inspires and ignites FDR students' interest ...continued from pg 1

Students must carefully think about what program they choose as they must stick with it for two years, and while Litwin and Pillius accommodate switches during the first two weeks of school, students may not get the courses they want.



"You might want to switch to something, but it could easily have a full waitlist," Litwin said. "We had 12 waitlists at the beginning of the year for programs."

For Vlad Slater, nothing compared to seeing the programs in person where he got to hear from older students and teachers about what each one entails.

"The video really doesn't do it justice," Slater said. "The teachers showing us around the classroom and showing us what's involved in the program – that's what really stood out to me."



Slater is most interested in applying for the automotive technology program because he has worked on cars with his father since he was younger.

"It's kind of instilled in me," Slater said about working on cars. "It's definitely a good starting program that will go in depth."

While Kerine Kozlowski has some experience cutting hair, she will apply for the cosmetology program to learn how to dye hair.

"We do a lot of hands-on work and different techniques," Kozlowski explained. "Since I was little, I was cutting my own hair."



Hyde Park Happenings

February 22
BOE Meeting, District Office
7 p.m.

February 24
Ben Kenyon Presentation at FDR
6 - 7:15 p.m.

February 28
Haviland Pops Concert,
6:30 p.m.

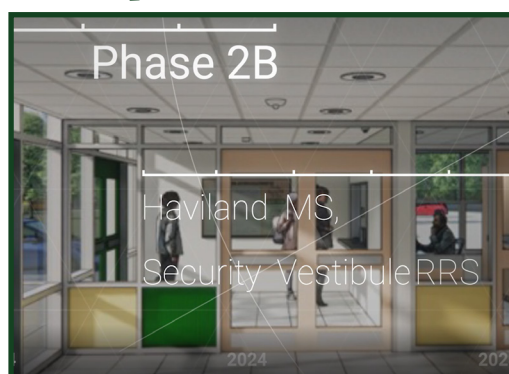
February 29
District STEAM Fair at FDR,
4 - 6 p.m.

March 8
Early Release for K-12 students/
Superintendent's Day Conference

Did you catch the latest Roman's Recap?

[Click Video](#)

Be sure to check out the Superintendent highlighting special things happening across HPCSD in his videos.



produced by Dutches, BOCES Office of Communications and Printing Services; Irwin Goldberg, Director; Elisa Silverio, Daniel Zulezman, Public Information Officers.