

Learning at...



WINTER 2023

Wallkill

A PUBLICATION OF THE WALLKILL CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

Wallkill Introduces Universal Pre-K Program

THIS YEAR, DOZENS OF CHILDREN IN THE WALLKILL CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ARE GETTING A JUMP-START ON BEING READY FOR KINDERGARTEN by participating in the District's new in-house Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) program, which is being implemented at Clare F. Ostrander Elementary School and Plattekill Elementary School.

The two sections of this UPK program were made possible by the Wallkill community's approval of the 2023-2024 budget last May. Each section (class) has 18 students, who are being taught by a certified teacher with the assistance of two teacher's aides.

The District is also partnering with two community-based organizations—Building Blocks Childcare Center and Most Precious Blood School—to provide 48 additional Pre-Kindergarten spots for Wallkill students, which were filled through a random lottery that was held in May.

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Pre-K students at Ostrander Elementary School in the block area of Mrs. Stey's classroom show they are doing more than just building; they are learning creativity, teamwork, and problem solving.

Letter from the Superintendent

Dear Wallkill Community,

This issue of Learning at Wallkill highlights the balanced approach we take in our District regarding the programs we offer to our students. You will find articles with a focus on positive youth development, team building, and academics. This approach to learning is preparing our students to have long-term success both in and outside of the classroom.



Over the next couple of months, we will be developing our 2024-2025 budget with the goals of preserving programs and staying within the tax cap. In May, we will be presenting our budget to the community in preparation for the May 21, 2024 Budget Vote. We are so fortunate to have a community that supports the education we are providing to our students. We will continue to make every effort to improve upon what we are offering students, as well as being fiscally responsible to our taxpayers.

I would like to thank our parents for the high level of participation at our open houses, parent forums, athletic events, and music concerts. Together, we will continue to make our schools the best educational experience for our students.

Thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely,

Kevin Castle, Superintendent of Schools

Wallkill Introduces Universal Pre-K Program

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Plattekill Elementary School Pre-K student Ryan Spencer utilizes a "choice board" to decide where he wants to work during the class's morning Choice Time rotation.

"We're building the foundation for Kindergarten—socially, emotionally, and academically," explained Ostrander UPK teacher Kailen Stey, who previously taught first grade at Wallkill.

Plattekill UPK teacher Barbara Bouck, who is in her 28th year of teaching at the District, agreed. "We're getting the children ready for the school experience," she said. "Many of them have never been to school before. We try to mimic what it's like to have a full day of Kindergarten by following a structured routine and schedule."

The program helps the Pre-K students learn

some of the basic school-related tasks, like how to unpack their backpacks, how to take off their coats and put them away in the closet, how to follow instructions, and how to wait their turn.

Academic lessons are play-based, with Pre-K learning standards and curriculum integrated into the learning activities, so the children are having fun.

Both classrooms start the school day with a Morning Circle, a time when the children sing songs, look at the calendar, and perhaps use a little math. During the day, the children visit various play-based learning centers and enjoy music and dance breaks. "We use music to stay active while building early literacy skills like rhyming," Mrs. Stey explained.

Learning is also being carried

out through books, puzzles, art materials, dramatic play props, "sensory bins," and math and science manipulatives.

Some of the activities—like tracing, cutting, coloring, and painting—are helping the children develop the fine motor skills they will need when they are ready to learn to write. During frequent visits to the gymnasium, the children also work on their gross motor skills.

The young learners are also learning how to speak up and express their needs. "We're giving them the words they need to resolve conflicts with their classmates," said Mrs. Bouck.

Both classrooms feature a popular block center, where, in addition to having fun building structures, the students are learning how to solve problems, use their creativity, and work as a team. They are also picking up some fairly advanced vocabulary words, like "cylinders," "arches," and "pillars."

The two district-based UPK classrooms also have play kitchens, used to teach life skills. To keep things interesting, the items in the kitchens change periodically. In December, for example, the kitchen in Mrs. Bouck's room was equipped with holiday-themed cookie cutters and Play-Doh, allowing the children to do some holiday "baking."

Activities change with the seasons in Mrs. Stey's room as well. "Some of the seasonal activities we did were going on



Ostrander Elementary School Pre-K student Autumn Curry practices life skills by "cooking breakfast" in the kitchen area of the classroom.



One of the more popular areas in Mrs. Bouck's Pre-K classroom at Plattekill Elementary School is the dress-up area. Pre-Kindergartener John Hibler V is trying on some safety gear.

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Autumn nature walks to observe seasonal changes, using our senses to explore a pumpkin, making homemade applesauce together, and transforming our dramatic play area into a fire station," she said.

At the math center, students practice skills like counting and looking for patterns, while in the ABC center, students work on early literacy skills such as name recognition and exploring letter/sound relationships. There is also a dress-up center in both rooms, where students can use their imaginations and dress up like various community helpers.

The dress-up area is a hit with Ostrander UPK student James Francis. "I like to be the police officer because I want to be a police officer when I grow up," he said. Autumn Curry, one of his classmates, appreciates the social aspects of Pre-Kindergarten. "I like playing with my friends," she enthused.

In Mrs. Bouck's class, student Finley Cifers said, "I like playing math games in the morning when the kids try to beat the teacher." Fellow Plattekill UPK student Alexandra Hedrick's favorite activity is molding various objects with Play-Doh. "I like using Play-Doh at school because it is fun," she explained.



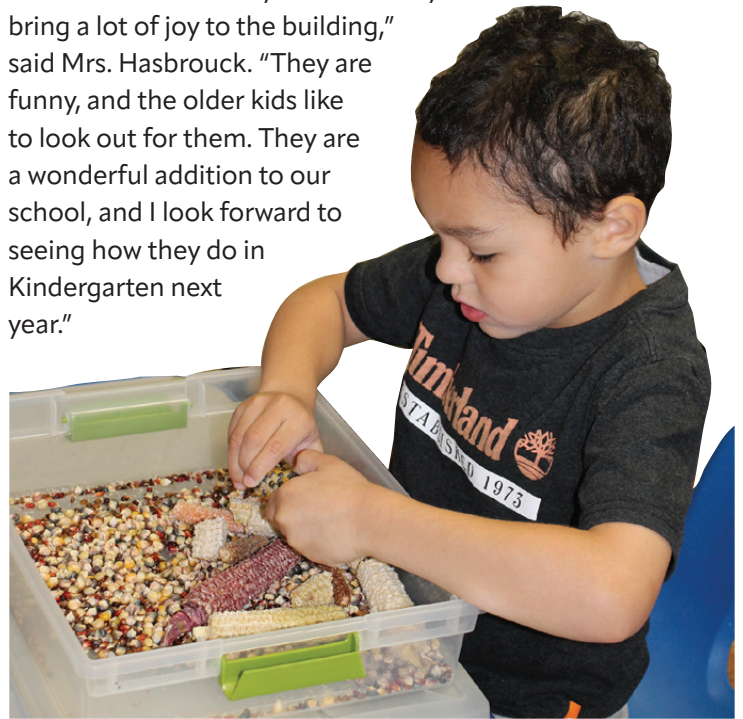
Ostrander Elementary School Pre-K student Chase Sinsabaugh imagines and practices what it might be like to be a doctor in the "Dress Up" activity section of the classroom.

Plattekill Elementary School Pre-K student Viviana Carrasquillo is engaged in a sensory activity that involves sorting and counting fruits by color and shape.



Plattekill Elementary School Principal Monica Hasbrouck is thrilled with the progress she has seen to date in her school's UPK class. During a recent visit to the classroom, she noticed that the children were able to sit quietly at their assigned spots on the reading rug and listen attentively as she read to them. "The children are interactive, they raise their hands, and they understand rules," she commented. Many of them, she added, easily grasped a recent math lesson that focused on the concept of "more than" and "less than."

The young students are having an impact on the rest of the school community as well. "They bring a lot of joy to the building," said Mrs. Hasbrouck. "They are funny, and the older kids like to look out for them. They are a wonderful addition to our school, and I look forward to seeing how they do in Kindergarten next year."



Plattekill Elementary School Pre-K student C.J. Lavalley participates in an activity that involves picking corn off the husk, just like members of the Lenape tribe might have done in our area long ago.

High School Panthers Mentoring Leptondale Elementary School Cubs

A MENTORSHIP PROGRAM THAT PAIRS WALLKILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH VOLUNTEER MENTORS FROM WALLKILL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

is having a big impact at Leptondale Elementary School, according to the school's principal, Scott Brown.

"The Panther Cub Mentor program," he said, "is helping to build confidence and self-esteem, foster self-worth, and facilitate positive peer relations among our student participants. It is also modeling the importance of making good choices."

While today's program is currently serving youngsters at all three of the District's elementary schools, the program originally made its debut at Leptondale more than a decade ago as a pilot program for young learners who had been identified by teachers, school counselors, and/or parents or guardians as being in need of a little extra help.

At Leptondale, the mentoring is being coordinated by Speech Language Pathologist Ivette DiMarco, who compares the program to the Big Brothers Big Sisters organization.

"Life is complicated, and handling the complexity of demands is challenging for adults and children alike," Mrs. DiMarco commented. "I strongly believe this mentorship program fosters and nurtures a foundation for mindfulness, navigating struggle, and building interpersonal communication skills that continue to evolve throughout our lifetime. This is done through facilitating a special connection with a high school student, who begins as a stranger, yet evolves into someone the child looks up to as a guide, friend, and role model."

The Leptondale participants and their Wallkill High School mentors meet on average once a week, usually in the classroom, cafeteria, playground, or the designated "Panther Cub Corner," located in the Speech room. During a typical visit, the mentors may engage their mentees in a student-selected game, sport, or hobby. The mentors

may also assist with homework, read stories, or reinforce academic skills.

At the High School, High School Special Education teacher Jennifer Scarano and Social Studies teacher Hunter Andrews oversee the program. "I have the privilege of collaborating with Mr. Andrews in our efforts to recruit and pair high school mentors with elementary 'cubs' who can benefit from their guidance and support," Mrs. Scarano said.

The program is a hit with both mentors and mentees. Leptondale Grade 3 student Camron Salvaty is full of praise

for his mentor, Grade 12 student Chris Bartolone. "Chris plays with me, and we get to do a lot of fun things," he said. Speaking of the bond he's forged with his young mentee, Chris said, "We have formed a relationship that makes me feel like a big brother to him. Seeing the smile on his face every week when I walk in the door is an indescribable feeling."

Anthony, a Grade 3 student, is a big fan of his mentor, Grade 12 student Kyle DeGroat. "My favorite part about having my big friend come is playing

a Chromebook game and teaching him how to play. He is so good at it now. He's my best friend!" Kyle, who has volunteered for the Panther Cub program for the past two years, said that he has also had a lot of fun. "Every week we play games and talk about whatever new is going on," he said. "I take pride in him calling me his 'best friend,' and I know I am making a positive impact."

According to Mrs. DiMarco, some mentors continue to maintain contact with their mentees after they graduate. "Some students have gone off to college, and they come back to the school over their Christmas break to visit with their former mentees," she noted. Others send her texts, asking her to share their messages with the younger students. "Long-lasting, positive relationships are established and have a positive impact for years to come," she concluded.



Wallkill Senior High School student Chris Bartolone (right) playing a game of Chutes and Ladders with his mentee, Leptondale Elementary School student Camron Salvaty.



The Girls Varsity Tennis team at Wallkill Senior High School matched up nicely with the Be-YOU-tiful Club for some after school fun.



Go Panthers! The Girls Varsity Soccer team at Wallkill Senior High School was all in for their scrimmage with the Be-YOU-tiful Club this fall.



Wallkill Senior High School students Savannah Post, Isabelle Ferranti, and Ella Russell enjoy the Be-YOU-tiful Club's pot-luck style meal before Thanksgiving break.

The High School's Be-YOU-tiful Club Builds Bonds, Changes Lives

What started as a field day has turned into an after-school club that provides life-changing experiences for students at Wallkill Senior High School (WSHS).

The Be-YOU-tiful Club began in 2017 as a Special Olympics-style field day that paired up students from the Grades K-12 Life Skills program with Varsity and Junior Varsity athletes. The annual event was wildly popular and has since evolved into an after-school club that is now in its second year. The goal of the Be-YOU-tiful Club is to cultivate connectedness between students while fostering acceptance and compassion.

Some of the club's activities include dancing, creating art, baking, and meeting with the WSHS sports teams for intramural-type scrimmages. Games are set up with the sports teams and club members evenly distributed on each side. These competitions are enjoyable learning experiences for all involved.

So far this year, the Girls Soccer team, Baseball team, and Tennis team have hosted the Be-YOU-tiful Club activities, and future plans include meeting with the Volleyball team, Softball team, and Cheerleading team. The club's advisor, Life Skills instructor Shannon LaRocco, explained, "There are connections made each time we meet. It provides students an opportunity to see that everyone is relevant and everyone is valuable, and everyone has just as much love to give as everyone else."

The membership, which is currently made up of a mix of approximately 30 students from the different student populations, is growing as the year progresses. Before Thanksgiving, the club hosted a feast for 20 club members and 25 guests. Most of the guests were athletes the members had connected with through club events.

Senior Kyle DeGroat, who has been a member of the club for two years, has high praise for his experience so far. "I have loved every moment. It is life-changing to get this close with the kids in the club and see what challenges they go through," he said. He sees the club members both in and outside of school and says they have become like family to him. "It has changed me and I have learned a lot about myself," he said.

Kyle, who is a Varsity Baseball athlete, first became involved with the Be-YOU-tiful Club after hearing about it from his coach, TD Mills. He jumped at the opportunity to help and be a part of such a meaningful organization. Ms. LaRocco points out that Kyle was instrumental in last year's Be-YOU-tiful Day, the club's field day. "The kids adore him, and he was a great help supervising the event," she said.

The annual field day is held in May each year and brings several alumni back to help out.

This winter a Unified Basketball team is also in the works. The team would be a combined group of special and general education students competing with six other Mid-Hudson Valley school districts.



At Wallkill Senior High School's Be-YOU-tiful Club's annual Thanksgiving Feast, members got together with old and new friends. Pictured here are (top row, left to right): Arman Snell, Dakota Shafer, Life Skills Instructor Shannon LaRocco, Miya VanWagenen, and Isabelle Ferranti, and (bottom row, left to right) Kyle DeGroat, Connor Mathes, and Saion Clarke.

Grade 4 Students and Teachers Benefit From New Learning Model

THIS YEAR, THE DISTRICT DEBUTED AN EXCITING NEW EDUCATION MODEL that is designed to improve Grade 4 students' academic experience while helping to build a sense of community throughout the school.

The English Language Arts (ELA) Plus 1 Model is an innovative approach to teaching and learning that taps into the specialized area of expertise of each Grade 4 teacher, providing students with a more enriching and well-rounded academic experience.

Under this new model, the Grade 4 students follow a rotation schedule that incorporates three core subject breakout lessons, each of which is being taught by a different member of the Grade 4 faculty.

For instance, at Ostrander Elementary School, the team is composed of Kim Jennings, who teaches the Math rotation; Rachel Miller, who teaches Social Studies; and Deborah Reese, who teaches Science. They are joined by Special Education teacher Sara Bender.

According to Mrs. Jennings, a Grade 4 student's typical school day begins in their assigned homeroom, where their "first rotation" subject is taught by their homeroom teacher. Then, during the rest of the day, the young Panthers rotate in groups to the other classrooms for 55-minute lessons in each of their two remaining subject areas. The students return to their homerooms for ELA—the last block of the day, which is taught for 1.5 hours.

"This new model gives our Grade 4 students the opportunity to work with each of our highly-skilled teachers, who are able to dive deeply into their own chosen areas of focus," said Mrs. Jennings, adding that the approach also makes teaching a more collaborative experience since faculty members are constantly working together to share ideas, solve problems, and discuss what they could be doing differently.

The ELA Plus 1 Model was introduced in Grade 4 at Ostrander in September after being successfully implemented in Grades 5 and 6 during the 2019-2020 school year. The same model is also being used in Grades 4-6 at both Leptondale and Plattekill Elementary Schools. The driving force behind the District's decision to integrate the model at each of the elementary schools was a desire

to give teachers the opportunity to specialize in a specific content area, which would in turn benefit their students.

"When considering expanding the ELA Plus 1 Model to grade 4, the District formed a committee involving representatives from all three elementary schools, who evaluated benefits, challenges, and implementation strategies," explained Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services Anthony White. "The committee aimed to gather different perspectives and analyze existing data to make informed decisions about the effectiveness of implementing the ELA Plus 1 Model."

To help the fourth graders acclimate to their new schedules, a color-coded system was implemented to assist with the organization of school supplies, ensuring that each student has what they need throughout the day.

"All of the students' supplies—including their notebooks and folders, Chromebooks, and snacks—go with them to each classroom, so they arrive prepared and ready to learn," Mrs. Miller explained. "We understood the new routine would take some getting used to, but we have been really impressed with how well the students have adapted to it and how excited they are to move around throughout the day."

The Grade 4 teachers report that since implementing this new model, they've noticed that behavioral issues have drastically been reduced,

something they attribute to the fact that students are not being required to sit in one spot all day.

"Students are up and moving and being provided with opportunities to engage with the curriculum in more meaningful ways," Mrs. Reese said. "We began noticing the positive effects almost immediately."

The ELA Plus 1 Model is also helping to foster a strong sense of community throughout the grade level, with students beginning to view themselves as one cohesive unit, rather than separate classroom entities. To help build upon that sense of community, a shared behavioral reward system was established, and all of the Grade 4 students and teachers worked together to formulate a list



Ostrander Elementary School Grade 4 teacher Kim Jennings reviews division equations with students Ellis Ruiz (left) and Marcel Charlesworth during a math rotation.

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Grade 4 Students and Teachers Benefit From New Learning Model

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Ostrander Elementary School Special Education teacher Sara Bender answers questions for Grade 4 student Kylie Brady during a math rotation.

of common rules and expectations. These expectations include behaving responsibly, treating classmates with kindness, and being respectful of shared desks and learning spaces.

Halfway through the school year, it's clear that this new approach to learning is a hit among Grade 4 students at Ostrander, many of who think the school day goes faster because they are not staying in one classroom all day.

"I like to move my legs and rotate to other classes so I am not bored," said Kayden Lyons.

Several other fourth graders appreciate the opportunity to switch classes because they get the chance to learn from different teachers.

"When we have different teachers, we get to know more adults in the building," said Connor Kievit.

"Each teacher teaches in a different way, and it makes it more fun to learn," added Sarah Griffiths.

"Positive Referrals" Recognizing Plattekill Students Who Do Good Things

When you're a student, getting sent to the principal's office typically means you're in a bit of trouble. But that's not necessarily the case at Plattekill Elementary School, where staff members who notice students "going above and beyond" are being given positive referrals. The referrals, explained Plattekill Elementary School Principal Monica Hasbrouck, are part of the school's PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) program.

"We like to promote positivity," said Mrs. Hasbrouck. "Catching someone doing something good can be contagious."

When any Plattekill staff member notices a student behaving in a particularly praiseworthy manner—for example, helping a classmate to understand a particularly difficult math problem or volunteering to assist a busy cafeteria worker—they can fill out a positive referral form and drop it in a mailbox located outside of Mrs. Hasbrouck's office.

In addition to including a checklist outlining the six pillars of the school's Character Education program (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship), the form includes space where the staff member can give details about the student's noteworthy act or behavior.

Students being recognized are called down to Mrs. Hasbrouck's office, where they receive a certificate, a coupon for free ice cream from Stewart's Shops, and a bracelet imprinted with the words, "My Principal is Proud of Me." A photo of the student is displayed on the school's Cubby Central Facebook page as well as on a bulletin board located in a school hallway. "By the end of last year, every inch of that bulletin board was covered," noted Mrs. Hasbrouck.

Mrs. Hasbrouck also shares the good news with the student's parents. "It's very enjoyable to be able to call home for a good reason," she said. "And parents deserve this accolade as much as their child does!"



Here are a few of our PAW-SITIVELY incredible students at Plattekill Elementary School who have been recognized this year for going above and beyond!

Wallkill Hosts Area All-State Music Festival with Our Own Grammy Semi-Finalist Dawn Amthor at the Helm

WALLKILL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL (WSHS) CHORAL TEACHER DAWN AMTHOR HAS BEEN VERY BUSY THIS YEAR.

In October, Ms. Amthor was named one of 25 semi-finalists for the Music Educator Award presented by the Recording Academy Grammy Museum. She is also the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) Festival Chairperson, in charge of the NYSSMA Zone 9 Area



Wallkill's Choral teacher Dawn Amthor (left) is a Grammy semifinalist for Music Educator and the Chairperson for this year's NYSSMA Zone 9 Area All-State Music Festival held at Wallkill Senior High School. The John D. Gardiner Auditorium is one of the few large enough to host the concert, which featured 400 student musicians. Above (right) is one of the choral groups rehearsing before the NYSSMA performance.



All-State Music Festival, which was held at Wallkill Senior High School this year. A great deal of coordination and planning has gone into both achievements.

The Grammy nomination, which was submitted by former student Shane Morris (WSHS Class of 2007), came as a surprise to Ms. Amthor. The Music Educator Award recognizes current educators who have made a significant and lasting contribution to the music education field and demonstrate a commitment to the broader cause of maintaining music education in schools.

In April, Ms. Amthor learned that she was one of 235 quarter-finalists from the more than 2,000 initial nominees. She then was required to submit video footage as part of the competition. Throughout the spring, Ms. Amthor compiled several hours of recordings, which included student performances and lessons, and even a question-and-answer session.

"I am grateful to everyone who helped with the process," said Ms. Amthor. "I had to record students but could not tell them why. I just said, 'When the press release comes out, you'll know.'" Once she was announced as a semi-finalist in October, Ms. Amthor was able to share the good news.

Ms. Amthor's students agree that her Grammy recognition is well deserved. "Ms. Amthor has taught me so much," explained junior Jono McLaughlin, who is a member of the WSHS Choir. "She is very empowering and has students lead the choir. She works with us to improve and solve any issues." He added that he has learned a great deal

from her. "She has had a big impact on my technical vocal training, and she is teaching me how to be a good musician," he said. And when it comes to the NYSSMA Festival, he said, "Ms. Amthor runs everything."

The NYSSMA Area All-State Festival took place at WSHS on November 17 and 18. The festival featured 400 students from five counties who were selected based on their performance at the NYSSMA Solo Festival earlier this year. During the festival, the talented musicians performed together under the direction of renowned conductors from across the country. Prior to the performance, senior Durward Entrekin, a violinist performing in the Symphony Orchestra, said, "This is a very select group. The musicians have put in a great deal of time practicing outside of school to be a part of this festival."

"Wallkill Senior High School is the only school in Ulster County with an auditorium large enough to host this event," explained Ms. Amthor. "This is a great honor to host, and I appreciate all of the students, faculty, staff, and parents who have made it possible."

The WSHS music program has a bright future. By becoming a semifinalist, Ms. Amthor has already secured a \$500 honorarium with a matching school grant. If she is named as one of the top 10 finalists that amount increases to \$1,000, and if she wins the Grammy, it becomes \$10,000! The final announcement will be made sometime in early December. No matter what the outcome is, the real winners are the students, who learn from her while gaining skills and experiences that will last them a lifetime.

Middle School Students Learn to Support Each Other with Words and Actions

WHEN STUDENTS ARRIVE AT JOHN G. BORDEN MIDDLE SCHOOL EACH SEPTEMBER, they learn how to be an effective member of a team through the Project Adventure unit in their Physical Education class.

Middle School Principal Michael Redmond, who takes part in the activities each year, has witnessed firsthand the excitement and comradery generated by Project Adventure. "Students are learning how to support each other using positive words and clear communication as they depend on the support they provide each other to accomplish the challenges that are part of this unit," he said.

Project Adventure accomplishes its goals through a two-part process: first, students learn to communicate and work together, and second, they push themselves physically and mentally. There are safety harnesses and belay ropes, and all students learn the commands and safety checks needed to accomplish each challenge. (To further ensure students' safety, all of the equipment undergoes thorough evaluations over the summer.)

Students start the adventure by playing cooperative learning games and participating in trust exercises. Through these activities, students build communication skills and learn how to work together.

In the final weeks of this team-building program, students scale the two-story-high climbing walls, support each other by holding belay ropes, walk on a balance beam suspended by ropes, and swing across the gym in a harness suspended from the ceiling. These feats are only

possible because the students have learned to guide others with clear directions and to support each other



Madelyn Pray, a Grade 8 student, is ready to swing across the gym after being attached to the harness by PE teachers LeeAnn Pazoga and Kevin Falk.



Grade 8 student Ryan Greer scales the climbing wall.

physically and verbally. By the time they are done, students have a newfound confidence in themselves, and many have formed new friendships too.

The Physical Education classes are a mix of Grade 7 and Grade 8 students, and some classes are a blend of general education students and special needs students from the Life Skills program. Physical Education instructor LeeAnn Pazoga notes that Project Adventure is the first learning unit each year. "We do this early on because students are coming from three different elementary schools and this unit helps to build community," she explained.

Students quickly learn to work together, including with those who may have different needs and abilities. Physical Education instructor Kevin Falk is impressed by how easily the students begin supporting each other. "They do such a great job working together, from the cooperative games at the start of the unit on through the Project Adventure challenges," he said. "We might make some slight modifications for different ability levels, but every student is excited to take part in this."

Ms. Pazoga notes that students choose when and if they are ready to tackle a particular challenge. "Students have several opportunities to try a challenge; this is 'challenge by choice,'" she said. "Some will wait a day or two, or even a year, before they try certain challenges, but when they do, there is an obvious feeling of accomplishment and increased confidence."

Even if a student chooses not to do a challenge, they are still a part of the activity, as they may serve as a climbing rope holder or in another support role. "Often by the end of the unit, students have decided to try something they might not have been comfortable with at the start," Ms. Pazoga commented. "It's fantastic to see how proud they are when they complete the challenge!"

Wallkill Duo Honored by Mid-Hudson School Study Council for Excellence In Education

Two members of the Wallkill Central School District Superintendent's staff received awards from the Mid-Hudson School Study Council (MHSSC) for their remarkable contributions to education. Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services Anthony White was honored for Excellence in Administration, and Secretary to the Superintendent of Schools and District Clerk Kelli Corcoran received the Award for Excellence for Support Staff. The honorees were celebrated during a reception hosted by MHSSC at Villa Venezia on November 1.

Mr. White was nominated by SUNY New Paltz's Interim Dean of the School of Education, Dr. Aaron Isabelle, for his work as a liaison to the university. According to Dr. Isabelle, over the past five years, the District has hosted close to 70 student teachers from SUNY New Paltz, in addition to 30 to 40 fieldwork students who come to observe each year. In his nomination, Dr. Isabelle said, "The District hosts our students time and again and provides them with wonderful experiences. Mr. White's leadership and support for our institution is exemplary and deserves to be recognized."

Superintendent Kevin Castle described Mr. White as someone who believes strongly in giving back. "The faculty and staff also have a great respect for Mr. White and trust that the student-teachers he brings in will continue the high level of instruction that they have established in their classrooms," he said.

Mr. Castle nominated Ms. Corcoran for her award, calling her "a tremendous asset to the Superintendent, Board of Education, and school district." He points out that she is a very patient and dedicated person who is always ready to help students, faculty, staff, and the community. "I can't ask for anyone better to work with," said Mr. Castle. "I value the work she does, and I value her as an individual."

The MHSSC is a non-profit organization whose fundamental purpose is to bring about the improvement of education in its member school districts in the Mid-Hudson Valley. It accomplishes that purpose through the cooperative study of common educational problems, the effective diffusion of educational practices, and the stimulation of active participation of school boards, administrators, teachers, pupils, and laypersons in educational planning and activities.



Congratulations to Wallkill's Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services Anthony White and Secretary to the Superintendent of Schools and District Clerk Kelli Corcoran on earning awards for excellence from the Mid-Hudson School Study Council!

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Important Telephone Numbers to Know

Leptondale Elementary School.....845-895-7200
Clare F. Ostrander Elementary School.....845-895-7225
Plattekill Elementary School.....845-895-7250
John G. Borden Middle School845-895-7175
Wallkill Senior High School.....845-895-7150

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