

**MANCHESTER-SHORTSVILLE  
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

Fall 2024



**#RedJacketPRIDE**

**EXCELLENCE**

Challenge and learning are the goals and the rewards

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**OUR MISSION**

We will challenge all learners and work in partnership with students, parents and community to achieve high standards.

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# Message from the Superintendent



Dear School Community,

As we kick off the 2024-2025 school year, I want to take a moment to celebrate the successful start we've had and express my deep gratitude to our students, staff, and community. Thanks to everyone's hard work and dedication, all of our students have transitioned smoothly into their new grades, classrooms, and roles, setting the stage for a year of growth and achievement.

I'd also like to recognize the incredible efforts that went into making this year's

Homecoming a truly memorable experience. It was a perfect blend of pride, tradition, and new opportunities, showcasing the spirit of our District. From the students who participated with enthusiasm to the staff and community members who made it all possible, Homecoming was a powerful reminder of what makes Manchester-Shortsville special.

As we continue to build on the pillars of listening, learning, and connecting, I am excited to see how we will create even more opportunities for growth and collaboration this year. These values will guide us as we work to ensure that every student feels supported and has the chance to reach their full potential in a safe and welcoming environment.

I want to reassure our families that we remain committed to keeping your children—your most precious treasures—safe, healthy, and thriving academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. Together, we are creating spaces where everyone can succeed, grow, and feel proud of their accomplishments.

Please be on the lookout for upcoming information regarding our District's Capital Project. While we will provide more details about the project's scope in future communications, our primary goal will be to strengthen and sustain our facilities for the future through thoughtful, long-term planning.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support. With your help, we are building a brighter future for all our students, and I look forward to what we will achieve together in the months ahead.

With Red Jacket PRIDE,

Christopher J. Barnard  
Superintendent of Schools  
Manchester-Shortsville CSD

# Enhancing School Bus Safety



This school year, you may notice something different about our school buses—and it's all part of our commitment to student safety. In New York State, it is estimated that over 50,000 private vehicles illegally pass stopped school buses with flashing red lights on a typical school day. Each one of these incidents puts our students at risk of injury. Recognizing the seriousness of this issue, our transportation department has taken steps to increase visibility and safety for our buses.

As part of this effort, we've introduced a new type of signage on the latest buses we've purchased. Our newest buses are equipped with fully illuminated and reflective stop arms. If you happen to see these buses picking up or dropping off students, especially during low-light times, you'll notice

the stop arm's octagon shape is much more visible. This enhancement ensures that drivers can easily spot the stop sign and react accordingly.

In addition to the stop arms, these buses also feature a fully illuminated "School Bus" sign, another step toward maximizing visibility for drivers. These illuminated signs give motorists ample time to recognize and respond to the presence of a school bus, reducing the likelihood of accidents. This is now a standard option offered by the bus manufacturer, and we've begun incorporating it into several of our buses.



“Our primary concern is student safety,” says Thomas Meilutis, the Red Jacket Director of Transportation. “By adding these illuminated and reflective features, we’re making sure our buses are more visible, especially in low-light conditions. It’s an investment in safety that we believe will make a real difference.”



Looking forward, all buses we purchase will include these enhanced safety features. Our team will also continue to explore and implement the latest products and innovations that improve safety for our students. Protecting our passengers is our top priority, and we are committed to staying at the forefront of school transportation safety.

Stay safe, and thank you for doing your part to ensure our students' well-being!



# Meet Buster: Red Jacket's Newly Certified Therapy Dog!



This summer brought exciting news for Red Jacket as our very own emotional support dog, Buster, successfully completed his training to become an official therapy dog. Buster, along with Mrs. Karen Hall, our Coordinator of Special Programs, worked tirelessly over the break to achieve this important certification.

So, what does this mean for our community? A certified therapy dog, like Buster, is trained to work in various community settings, including schools, hospitals, and nursing homes. These special dogs provide comfort, affection, and emotional support to those in need. They help boost confidence, offer motivation, and serve as a

source of companionship. To become a therapy dog, they must be friendly to everyone, kept clean and neat, and pass rigorous tests.

At Red Jacket, having a therapy dog in school requires the Superintendent's approval, ensuring that Buster's presence benefits everyone.

Therapy dogs play a significant role in helping children who may be feeling sad or scared. Their soft, cuddly nature has a calming effect, making kids feel better. For students learning to read, having a therapy dog to read to can reduce nervousness and build confidence. But Buster's role goes beyond being a comforting presence. He's

trained to help students develop social skills, manage their emotions, and support those who may have learning challenges.

Buster is a Goldendoodle, which means he has hair, not fur, and he doesn't shed. This breed is hypoallergenic, making Buster a great fit for public places like schools. If your child has a fear of dogs, please reach out to Karen Hall via ParentSquare or email at [karen.hall@redjacket.org](mailto:karen.hall@redjacket.org), so we can ensure that Buster's presence is a positive experience for everyone. Exposure to therapy dogs can even help children overcome their fear of animals.



We're thrilled to have Buster as part of our Red Jacket family and look forward to the positive impact he will have on our students and community!

# Red Jacket Debuts Varsity Golf Team in First-Ever Match



On September 4th, Red Jacket made history by participating in its first-ever golf match! Over the summer, the Manchester-Shortsville Board of Education approved the formation of the school's own golf team, marking an exciting new chapter for the athletics program. Previously, Red Jacket students teamed up with Midlakes for varsity golf, but now athletes have the opportunity to compete independently under their own school banner.

The varsity golf team features 9 players, including two seniors, Nate Close and Jordan Cooley. The team will face off in 14 matches this year, with seven of those being home matches

at Winged Pheasant Golf Links in Shortsville.

The team, coached by Stephen Powers, has been working hard throughout the summer in preparation for the season. Coach Powers, an avid golfer with years of experience, has been instrumental in guiding and inspiring the players. He shared, "The team is thrilled to play matches representing



Red Jacket and is eager to compete this season. We've been working diligently, and it's rewarding to see the players ready to showcase their skills and dedication on the course."

Shannon Brown, Athletics Director, expressed enthusiasm about the team's debut, saying, "It's always exciting when you're able to add more opportunities for students to compete and grow, both as athletes and individuals.



This speaks volumes about the growth of the athletics program and the commitment to expanding the experiences offered to students."

This inaugural season represents a significant milestone for Red Jacket, and we look forward to supporting the golf team as they develop their skills and proudly represent the school on the greens.

# Building a Safer Future: Superintendent Barnard Highlights OCTAC's Importance



At a press conference on Wednesday, September 25th, Manchester-Shortsville Central School District Superintendent Christopher Barnard emphasized the significance of the newly established Ontario County Threat Assessment Committee (OCTAC).

"I want to express my deep appreciation for the incredible work the Ontario County Sheriff's Office is doing in creating this committee," Superintendent Barnard stated. He highlighted that this initiative will profoundly impact the Manchester-Shortsville district, as well as all nine districts and the over 14,000 students throughout Ontario County.

The OCTAC is a collaborative effort involving local law enforcement, mental health professionals, school officials, and community leaders. Its primary goal is to assess and mitigate

potential threats to students and the community before they escalate into violence. This multi-agency approach fosters a comprehensive assessment of concerns, creating a safer environment

for all.

Superintendent Barnard noted, "By identifying and addressing issues before they escalate, we can create a more secure environment for learning." He expressed his enthusiasm for the partnership with the Sheriff's Office, viewing it as a critical resource for positive outcomes across the county. "This initiative is a crucial step in making Ontario County one of the best places to live and raise a family in New York State," he concluded.

The OCTAC will also prioritize community engagement and education, encouraging residents to report suspicious activities. Community members can download the Ontario County Sheriff's Office App from Google Play or the App Store to easily report concerns and enhance communication with law

enforcement.

Superintendent Barnard emphasized that community involvement is vital for ensuring safety: "A united effort can significantly enhance the security of Ontario County's educational environment." The committee will also provide training for staff and community members to recognize warning signs and effectively communicate when necessary.

By working together, we can foster a safer environment for all students, staff, and families in Ontario County. Download the Ontario County Sheriff's Office app today and stay engaged in our community's safety efforts.

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Built by: THE SHERIFF APP.COM

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Navigating critical information has never been easier.

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**AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD NOW!**

# Red Jacket Alumna Takes on Prominent Role at FLCC



Misty J. Hall, a 2022 graduate of Red Jacket, has been appointed as the student trustee for Finger Lakes Community College (FLCC)

for the 2024-25 academic year. The announcement was featured in FLCC's September 2024 newsletter. In this role, Misty will be a full voting member of the board, bringing her unique perspective and insights to the table.

Currently a double major in Physical Education and Liberal Arts, Misty has already made a significant impact at FLCC. She is an active member of the Phi Theta Kappa honor society and the Student Corporation, reflecting her dedication to academic excellence and student leadership.

In addition to her academic pursuits, Misty works as a student aide in the Academic Advising, Career, and Transfer Services (AACTS) Office, where she supports fellow students in their educational and career goals.

Looking ahead, Misty plans to transfer to Nazareth University to pursue a degree in Nursing, continuing her commitment to making a difference in the lives of others. Congratulations to Misty on this impressive achievement; we look forward to seeing all that she will accomplish in her new role!

## RED JACKET COMMUNITY LIBRARY



Red Jacket Community Library (RJCL) is pleased to announce the arrival of our new Sensory Kits. The Rochester Regional Library Council and Friends (RRLC) & Foundation of the Rochester Public Library

(FFRPL) awarded RJCL a grant from the Harold Hacker Fund for the Advancement of Libraries to make creation of these kits possible.

Three Sensory Kits were created, two of the sensory kits are for children and one kit is geared towards adults. Each kit contains a noise reduction headset, multiple fidgets, sunglasses, a sensory bottle, a timer and a set of communication cards. These kits are available at the circulation desk to be checked out for in-library use.

In addition to the sensory kits, RJCL was also able to purchase other items to create a more sensory friendly environment within the library. Such items included fluorescent lighting covers, fidgets, liquid floor tiles, a sensory den with pillows, and a weighted lap pad for sensory breaks. Materials to further enhance the accessibility of programming, such as our currently running Sensory Playtime program, included toddler-safe sensory bin manipulatives, a manipulative cleaning bin set, and four wiggle seats.

Visit our website [redjacket.owwl.org](http://redjacket.owwl.org) or stop by the library at 89 S. Main Street in Manchester for more information. We look forward to seeing you!

# Budding Readers Program

## Free Books for Babies

Is your baby 36 months of age or younger? Do you know a baby of this age in our school district? Budding Readers has free “bundles of books” with tips for parents about reading to babies and toddlers ready to deliver. To request a free “bundle of books”, you can call, email, place a request on our website, or scan the QR code. One of our volunteers will contact the parent to arrange a mutually convenient time to deliver the bundle of books.



Email: [books@buddingreaders.org](mailto:books@buddingreaders.org)  
Website: [www.books@buddingreaders.org](http://www.books@buddingreaders.org)  
Phone: (585) 900 – 1725

Thank you for helping us provide books for babies.

Budding Readers offers free bundles of books in the following school district communities: Bloomfield, Canandaigua, Honeoye, Marcus Whitman, Midlakes, Naples, Red Jacket & Victor.

# Join the Red Jacket Transportation Team!



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- \$21.50/ hour (Minimum Salary)
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- Paid Time off
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CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
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