







UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Parents, Guardians and Community Members,

The fall season has been full of activities and learning experiences for our students and staff. As you will see in this issue, our students exemplify the core beliefs we work to instill and show Marauder pride in all that they do! Preparing students for their future is our mission. We will continue to provide exceptional educational programming and services that position students for success.

One goal as a District is to expand communication this year with the new web-based platform ParentSquare. This application will not only provide a more streamlined system for important notifications but it will also allow for real-time communication with teachers, coaches, advisors and administration. Over the next several months, we will be providing families with information and training sessions on the use of this platform to help you stay connected with school. Please note, our School Messenger System will still be used for emergency notifications such as school closures or delays for the remainder of the school year so families have ample time to transition to ParentSquare.

Supporting social and emotional well-being is also a focal area for our work this year. School staff opened up the school year with a professional development session on building positive relationships with students and we will continue our work to embed the principles that reflect a school culture where students feel welcomed, supported and cared for. Programmatically we are still implementing the Positivity Project and making use of the many resources provided by the New York State Education Department to aid in this endeavor.

With the holidays quickly approaching, so are many of the cherished school events we look forward to. Students and staff have been busy preparing for concerts, assemblies and performances. We hope you have an opportunity to join us and experience first-hand the talent and creatively embodied by our students .

I would like to thank each of you for your commitment to our District and your ongoing support of our students. Working together we can accomplish great things!

Sincerely,

Michele D. LaGase Superintendent of Schools

Michele D. Lagare



HIGHLIGHTS

Page 1	S	uperin ⁱ	tendei	nt′s №	lessage
, age		apoilii	contact		icoouge

Page 2 Open House & Music Dept. News

Page 3 Trunk or Treat & Halloween Parade

Page 4 Emergency Responses

Page 5 Community Resources

Page 6 Homecoming Week

Page 7 Every Day Counts & Turkey Trot

Page 8 Parents Bill of Rights

Page 9 Code of Conduct

Page 10 Athletics News

Page 11 Student Council News

Page 12 Elementary Student of the Month

Page 13 PTSO News

Page 14 Veterans Day Program

Page 15 Music Dept. Events & Contact Sheet











BROOK'S BBQ FUNDRAISER

The New York Mills Chorus will host a Brook's BBQ fundraiser on Thursday, December 5th from 3:00-6:00 p.m. Tickets are \$14 and will be on sale beginning November 12th from any Chorus member, Mrs. Lovecchio or the attendance office.

Dinners will include half a chicken, baked potato, coleslaw and a dinner roll. Dinners will be brought to your car as you drive up to the cafeteria on December 5th.

All proceeds will go toward the Chorus' music competition trip to Six Flags New England in MA. We hope to see everyone there and thank you for your support!





TRUNK OR TREAT

Spooktacular Success! Thanks to All Who Made Trunk or Treat a Hauntingly Great Family Event!

Trunk or Treat was a huge success! We want to thank our PTSO for making this fun family event possible.





























NEW YORK MILLS UNION FREE SCHOOL **EMERGENCY RESPONSES**

Below is a description of the New York State standardized terminology that the District is using during emergencies. Depending on the nature of the incident, the school will implement one of the following protective actions:



SHELTER-IN-PLACE

Used to shelter students and staff inside the building in the event it is safer inside the building than outside. For example, this response might be implemented in the event of severe weather.



HOLD-IN-PLACE

Used to limit movement of students and staff while dealing with short-term emergencies, such as maintenance issues or medical emergencies.



EVACUATE

Used to evacuate students and staff from the building. When an evacuation is necessary, students can be moved outside on school grounds or to a predetermined shelter site depending on the situation, such as in the event of a fire.



LOCKOUT

Used to secure school buildings & grounds during incidents that pose an imminent concern outside of the school.



LOCKDOWN

Used to secure school buildings & grounds during incidents that pose an immediate threat of violence in or around the school.



BLUE LIGHTS

External and internal blue lights are used to inform students, staff, and visitors that the building is in Lockdown. The Lockdown may be a drill or in response to an actual emergency. Prominently posted signs regarding our blue emergency lights are located at each main building entrance. These signs advise all visitors to leave the campus if the lights are on (call the main office to confirm it is safe to return to the building in the event it was just a drill).



EMERGENCY AWARENESS FOR PARENTS

PREPARATION FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS:

- 1. Make sure emergency contact information is correct: mailing address, phone numbers, and pick-up information. Your child will only be released to parents and persons identified on the emergency contact list.
- Keep medical information and medications up to date with the school nurse.
- 3. Review the emergency response information with your child. Remind them to listen to their teacher/staff for instructions and to remain calm. Explain to them that they may be moved to a different location in the event of an emergency. Talking with your child ahead of time can help to ease anxiety and fear if an emergency occurs.
- 4. Keep alert. Report any suspicious behaviors or activities to school administration or law enforcement.
- "See Something, Say Something!"

IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY AT SCHOOL:

- 1. If an emergency occurs, student safety is the first priority.
- 2. DO NOT RESPOND TO THE SCHOOL UNTIL NOTIFIED TO DO SO. Listen for further instruction. Monitor the District's school messenger system and the District's website for official information. Be accessible through the emergency phone numbers you provided to the school.
- 3. Students will be held in school custody until the emergency has been declared safe. If your child will be dismissed directly to your custody or the custody of persons identified on the emergency contact list, they must be signed out.
- When picking up your child, ensure that you have proper identification with you. During an emergency, pickup procedures may be different and ID may be required to release your child.



COMMUNITY/LOCAL **RESOURCES** FOR FAMILIES

INFO - REFERRAL SERVICES

MVCAA/Runaway & Homeless Youth Program 315.624.9930

Neighborhood Center 315.272.2600

Oneida County Dept. of Social Services 315.798.5804

FOOD - CLOTHING - SHELTER

Food Bank of Central New York

315.437.1899 or visit www.foodbankcny.org

Evelyn's House

Serves pregnant/parenting women ages 16-24 315.733.0236

Housing Info & Referral Center

315 735 5246

It Takes a Village Diaper Bank

315.841.8512

Oneida and Herkimer County Department of Social Services

HEAP, SNAP, medical assistance, rental assistance 315.798.5700 or 315.867.1291

*Rescue Mission

Serves males 18+, 212 Rutger St. 315.735.1645

WHERE TO GET A MEAL

*Hope House

112 South St., Mon.-Sat.: 10-11 a.m., 12-1 p.m. & 4-5 p.m.; Sun.: 12-1 p.m. & 4-5 p.m. 315.793.3723

*Rescue Mission of Greater Utica

201 Rutger St., Mon.-Fri.: 7-7:30 a.m., 12-12:30 p.m. & 4-4:25 p.m.; Weekend: 8-8:30 a.m. 12-12:30 p.m. & 4-4:25 p.m. 315.735.1645

COVID-19

COVID-19 Therapeutic Locator 1.800.232.0233

Oneida County Health Dept. **COVID-19 Questions**

315.798.5748

COVID-19 Hotline for Individuals Without Insurance

888.873.2869

SUPPORT SERVICES

ACR Health: LGBTQ Support Group

315 475 2430

Catholic Charities

315.724.2158

Empowered Pathways

315 724 1718

Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York

315.793.7000

On-Point for College

315.790.5588

The Salvation Army (Utica)

315.724.8736

Underground Teen Center

315.733.7768

Working Solutions

315.793.2229

HEALTH: ADDICTION. COUNSELING & WELL-BEING

Alcoholics Anonymous

315 732 6880

Beacon Center

315.366.4100

Behavioral Services

315.798.8868

Center for Family Life & Recovery

315.733.1709

Central New York Health Home Network

315.624.9670

Clinton Therapy and Testing Center

315.859.1973

Health Friends

315.724.0988

Integrated Community Alternatives Network (ICAN)

315.792.9039

Maria Horan and Associates

315 724 5344

Mohawk Valley Psychiatric Center

315.738.3800

Mohawk Valley Counseling Associates

315.765.0121

Oneida County Dept. of Mental Health

315 768 3659

Planned Parenthood

315.724.6146

Resource Center for Independent

Living RCIL 315.797.4642

Samaritan Counseling Center

315.724.5173

Utica Community Health Center

315.793.7600

CHILDCARE

The Neighborhood Center

315 272 2600

OTHER SERVICES

Affordable Connectivity Program

(\$30 savings per month through Spectrum) https://www.fcc.gov/acp

Government Phone Program

www.assurancewireless.com

Mobile Crisis Assessment Team (MCAT)

315.732.6228 or 1.844.732.6228

Oneida County Child Advocacy Center

315.732.3990

Oneida County Child Protective Services

315.798.5364

PINS and Pre-PINS

(Persons in Need of Supervision) for incorrigible and/or truant youth

For more information, visit www.211midyork.org

HOTLINES

American Pregnancy Hotline

1.866.672.2296

Child Abuse Hotline

1.800.342.3720

text "START" to 88788

1.888.843.4564

MVCAA Runaway and

LGBTQ National Hotline

Homeless Youth 24hr Hotline

315.624.9930

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

National Runaway Safeline

1 800 RUNAWAY

NYS Domestic Violence 24hr Hotline

1.800.942.6906 or text 1.844.997.2121

Teen Line

1.800.852.8336 or text "TEEN" to 839863

YWCA Confidential 24hr **Crisis Hotline**

(Domestic Violence) 315.797.7740

In an Emergency - Dial 911



AN UNFORGETTABLE HOMECOMING!

SPIRIT WEEK & PEP RALLY THRILLS -

During the week of October 7-11, New York Mills students celebrated Homecoming with themed Spirit Days, a Pep Rally and Homecoming Dance. This year's Spirit Days included Barbie Day, BBQ Dads versus Soccer Moms, White Lies and a day for wearing the signature New York Mills Marauder colors.

At the October 10th Pep Rally, the seniors and juniors played an exciting game of powder puff flag football, including guest cheerleaders doing stunts on the sidelines. The junior class put up a tough fight, but ultimately the senior class claimed the victory! Following the game, students from each grade had the chance to participate in games such as potato sack races and musical chairs, with some receiving a pie in the face. Students had a blast spending time with their friends and participating in pep rally activities.

On October 12th, the varsity football team took on Cooperstown/Milford in a hard-fought Homecoming game. That evening, the festivities concluded with the Homecoming Dance.

Overall, Homecoming was filled with fun activities and created memories for years to come. We would like to thank the Student Council for organizing everything and making Homecoming Spirit Week so successful, as well as the parents, students and faculty who participated in events and showed support. Go Marauders!



EVERY DAY COUNTS!

One of the main factors that affects growth and achievement is attendance. Nationwide, chronic absenteeism and tardiness is detrimentally impacting student achievement. Check out the statistics in the charts below shared by AttendanceWorks (AttendanceWorks.org), detailing the significance of absenteeism on student success.

If your child misses	That equals	Which is	And over 13 years of schooling thats
1 day every 3 weeks	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 years
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2.5 years
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

How about 10 minutes late a day? Surely, that won't affect my child?

They are only missing	That equals	Which is	And over 13 years of schooling thats
10 minutes per day	50 minutes per week	Nearly1.5 weeks per year	Nearly 1 year
20 minutes per day	1hr 40 mins per week	Over 2.5 weeks per year	Nearly 1 year
30 minutes per day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 years
1 hour per day	1 day per week	8 weeks per year	Over 2.5 years

49TH ANNUAL TURKEY TROT A GOBBLING SUCCESS!

On November 2nd, the 49th Annual New York Mills Optimist Turkey Trot was held on the New York Mills UFSD campus. More than 90 runners participated, and first place winners in each division were awarded with a Turkey Trot shirt.









EW YORK MILLS UFSD DRAMA CLUB PRESENTS YOU'RE A

YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN

The High School Drama Club performed "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" on November 21st, 22nd and 23rd at 7:00 p.m. in the High School Auditorium.

The musical, based on the characters created by cartoonist Charles M. Schulz, tells the story of an average day in the life of the famous comic strip hero, Charlie Brown. The vignettes show Charlie Brown and the Peanuts gang navigating life's big questions through sports, homework, songs, crushes and friendship.

PARENTS BILL OF RIGHTS FOR DATA PRIVACY AND SECURITY

The NY Mills UFSD seeks to use current technology, including electronic storage, retrieval, and analysis of information about students' educational experience to enhance the opportunities for learning and to increase efficiency.

The following is the New York Mills Union Free School District's bill of rights for data privacy and security:

- 1. A student's personally identifiable information (PII) cannot be 5. Parents have the right to file complaints with the New sold or released by the New York Mills Union Free School for any commercial or marketing purposes.
- 2. Parents have the right to inspect and review the complete contents of their child's education record including any student data stored or maintained by the New York Mills Union Free School. This right of inspection is consistent with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In addition to the right of inspection of the educational record, Education Law §2-d provides a specific right for parents to inspect or receive copies of any data in the student's educational record. The New York State Department of Education (NYSED) will develop policies and procedures pertaining to this right.
- 3. State and federal laws protect the confidentiality of PII, and safeguards associated with industry standards and best practices, including, but not limited to, encryption, firewalls, and password protection, must be in place when data is stored or transferred.
- 4. A complete list of all student data elements collected by the State is available for public review at http://www.p12. nysed.gov/irs/sirs/documentation/NYSEDstudentData.xlsx, or you may obtain a copy of this list by writing to the Office of Information & Reporting Services, New York State Education Department, Room 863 EBA, 89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234.

York Mills Union Free School about possible privacy breaches of student data by the New York Mills Union Free School's third-party contractors or their employees, officers, or assignees, or with NYSED. Complaints regarding any student data breaches should be directed to:

> Michele D. LaGase, Superintendent of Schools New York Mills Union Free School 1 Marauder Blvd. New York Mills, NY 13417

> 315.768.8127 | mlagase@newyorkmills.org

- **6.** The exclusive purposes for which the data will be used;
- **7.** How the contractor will ensure that the subcontractors it uses will abide by data protection and security requirements;
- 8. When the agreement with the third party contractor expires and what happens to the data at that time;
- 9. If and how an affected party may challenge the accuracy of the data that is collected: and
- **10.** Where the data will be stored and the security protections taken to ensure the data will be protected

All complaints must be accompanied by a Breach or Unauthorized Release of Student Data Complaint Form and submitted in person to the superintendent's office. The form can be found on our website under District Procedures & Policies>Breach or Unauthorized Release of Student Data Complaint Form. A complaint can also be submitted to the New York State Chief Privacy Officer using an online form at: www.nysed.gov/data-privacy-security/report-improper-disclosure

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION ABOUT THIRD PARTY CONTRACTS

For purposes of further ensuring confidentiality and security of student data — as well as the security of personally-identifiable teacher or principal data — the Parents' Bill of Rights (above) and the following supplemental information must be included in each contract that this District enters into with a third-party contractor with access to the information listed above (numbers 6 – 10).



CODE OF CONDUCT - SUMMARY

HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, AND BULLYING IS PROHIBITED AT SCHOOL

You should never feel that it is not safe for you to come to school and participate in all school activities. You should never be prevented from concentrating on your school-work because another student or a school staff member is teasing you, making fun of you, pushing you around, or threatening you in some way, because of your race, color, weight, national origin (where your family comes from), ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex or any other reason.

You may not act toward another student in a way that reasonably might make them feel threatened or unsafe, or that might reasonably make them unable to concentrate on their school work, because of what you think about their race, color, weight, national origin (where their family comes from), ethnic group, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex, or any other reason. It is against school rules for you to do this by your physical actions or by your verbal statements, including electronic messages.

When responding to acts of harassment, discrimination and bullying, the District will take an age appropriate approach to remedy the situation with the goal of prevention and education; as well as, intervention and discipline. We will consider the nature and severity of the conduct, the developmental age of the student engaging in the conduct, the person's prior disciplinary record and the impact on the student at whom it was directed. School employees who witness conduct that may be harassment, discrimination, or bullying, or who receive a report of such conduct, are required to report that conduct to the Dignity Act Coordinators or the Superintendent. This should happen by the end of the following school day.

We look forward to working with you to ensure a safe, harassment free learning environment for all students. The full version of the Code of Conduct is available on our website, or by contacting one of the principals. Please keep us informed and encourage your child to reach out to one of the principals, or another staff member, if he or she does not feel safe or is being bullied.

Respectfully,

Michele D. LaGase Superintendent of Schools

Michele D. Lagare

Should you have a harassment, discrimination, or bullying concern that you wish to report, you may do so to the following Board of Education appointed Dignity Act coordinator:

Mary Facci: 315.768.8124



Athletic Booster Club

MEET THE NEW MARAUDER!

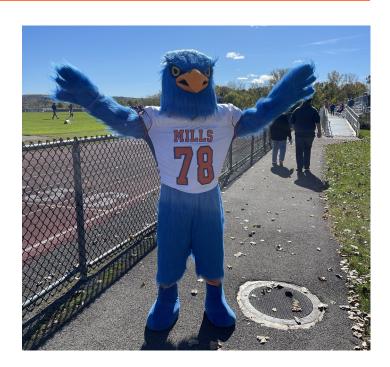
The New York Mills Athletic Boosters is happy to announce we have a NEW mascot costume! The K-12 students voted last year on which mascot costume they wanted and we purchased it. It debuted at the Homecoming Game. Go Marauders!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We are looking for volunteers to help with the concession stand during basketball games and to help sell tickets for a 50/50 raffle at all home games. If this is something you would be willing to help us with, please email us at athleticboosters@newyorkmills.org

Our next fundraisers will include a booth at the craft fair selling Marauder merchandise and two school dances in March for grades 5-6 and 7-8. Look for information about that beginning in January.

We are always looking for new members and people who are willing to volunteer when needed. We meet the first Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. in the high school library.



Athletics News

Gymnastics

New York Mills students Ava Clark and Gabriella Dietz competed in the Section III Gymnastics State Qualifier at Valley Gymnastics in Utica on October 25th. Their team won the Sectional title and Ava's floor routine placed first.

Girls Varsity Cross Country

The girls varsity cross country team won the Center State Conference Championship on October 26th.

Arianna Piazza was named a Center State Conference All-Star.







Give Thanks by Giving Back!

THE STUDENT COUNCIL ORGANIZED A THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE TO BENEFIT THE EMMAUS HOUSE.

Emmaus House provides a warm, comfortable homelike environment for the women and children in need of temporary emergency shelter. Guests are provided not only shelter, but meals, toiletries and the love and encouragement needed to rebuild their lives. Each grade level (7-12) adopted a family in need.

Shopping for Thanksgiving Food Drive groceries is typically done by the class officers, but all classmates were encouraged to bring in various items like cans of sweet potatoes, boxes of stuffing, jars of gravy and other items that can be used/eaten by the family for Thanksgiving.

Thank you!





Members of the New York Mills Student Council participated in Make a Difference Day on October 20th. The idea behind Make a Difference Day is to show that anyone can impact their community positively, no matter how big or small the action.

ELEMENTARY

STUDENT OF THE MONTH























The Neyomian Yearbook Staff is busy preparing the book that will provide students in grades 7–12 with the information and memories that will capture this school year forever. Give your student the gift of a yearbook so they will be able to look back at all of the friends and fun, and remember their own extraordinary experiences of the 2024–2025 school year. Yearbooks are on sale now at www.yearbookordercenter.com and our school's order number is 2899.

Purchase an ad for a graduating senior and show your child just how proud you are of them for all of their hard work and incredible accomplishments with an ad in their senior yearbook. You can add personal photos, special memories and a unique message to honor and congratulate them in a way they'll be able to cherish for years to come. Businesses in the community may create and purchase their ads of support online as well. You can purchase ads here: www.yearbookordercenter.com Be sure to use the school code 2899.

Look for our yearbook staff at the upcoming PTSO Craft Fair. We will be selling the yearbook, as well as extra copies of years gone by. If you have a reunion coming up, or just have a missing book in your yearbook collection that you want to replace, please stop by our booth and we'd be happy to help you enjoy your memories. If you have any questions, please email: nymyearbook@ newyorkmills.org

STORYBOOK PUMPKINS SPARK IMAGINATION!

K-6 STUDENTS PICK THEIR FAVORITE CHARACTER CREATIONS

All students in K-6 were invited to decorate a pumpkin to look like a character from a book. Mrs. Howe, our library media specialist sponsored the contest as a way to promote reading and discussions about book characters. The student votes were tallied and three winners were chosen as this year's favorites.

Thank you to everyone who entered a pumpkin in this year's contest and congratulations to the students with winning entries!







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IT'S COOL TO BE KIND

Huge congratulations to Mrs. Kohn's kindergarten class for winning the "It's Cool to be Kind" contest hosted by GPO Federal Credit Union and Kiss FM!

Your kindness and teamwork have truly shined, making our school a better place. Keep spreading that positivity!



Utica University Education Program

New York Mills UFSD continues its partnership with the Utica University education program. Several Utica University pre-service teachers majoring in elementary education come once a week to work with many of our first and second grade students. The program focuses on reading and enrichment. Students often read popular engaging stories and then get creative with a craft or activity.









The New York Mills PTSO 45th Annual Craft Fair will be held at the school on December 7th and 8th from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Admission will be \$3.

Donate a hat or gloves at the door to receive \$1 off admission!

The Craft Fair is well known for having an incredible variety of paintings, photographs and so much more. There will be more than 100 vendors with many new faces. This is a show you don't want to miss if you're looking for great holiday decorations and gift ideas.

the following link to volunteer:

www.newyorkmills.org/PTSOCraftFair

The PTSO would like to thank you in advance for helping us make this a successful event. The PTSO meets the second Wednesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. in the high school library and all are welcome!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

It's craft fair time and we are in need of volunteers! Please use the link below to sign up! See everyone soon! www.newyorkmills.org/craft-fair-volunteers



NS DAY PROGRAM



Music Department Upcoming Events

12/05 Brooks BBQ, 3:00–6:00 p.m. | School Cafeteria | Pre-order started Nov. 12th Call the school or see any chorus member

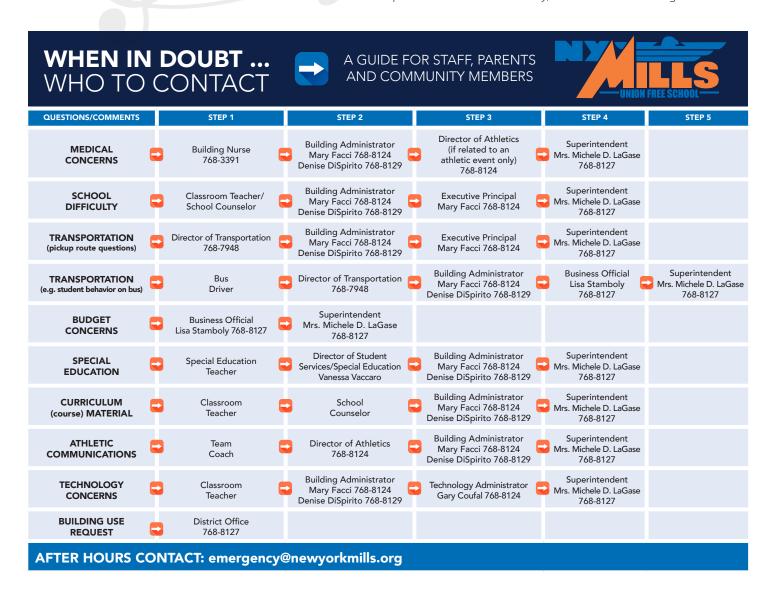
12/12 7-12 Grade Band, Chorus & Handbell Choir, 7:00 p.m.

12/17 Elementary Concert, 5:30 p.m.

01/08 Jr. High All-County Auditions

01/09 Jr. High All-County Auditions (Snow date)

We welcome everyone to our winter concert, as it is a wonderful way to fill your holidays with the beautiful music our musicians create here at our school. The concert is free and open to the entire community, friends and all our neighbors.



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District Office New York Mills, NY 13417

Non-Profit Organization
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Utica, NY
Permit #566

BOARD OF EDUCATION

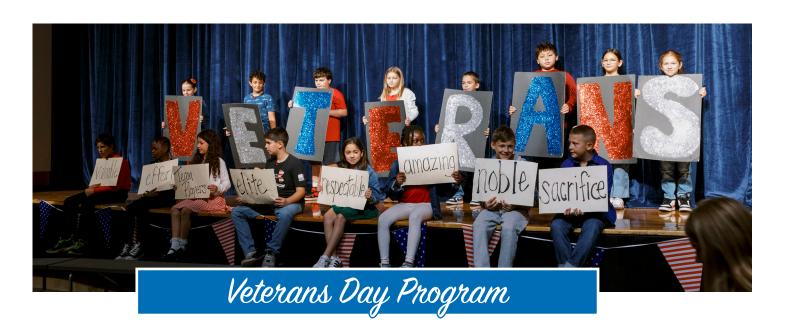
Kristin Hubley, *President*Robert Mahardy Jr., *Vice President*Sara DeFazio
Jacqueline Edwards
Jeremy Fennell
Steve King
Abbie Taylor

ADMINISTRATION

Michele D. LaGase, Superintendent of Schools Mary Facci, K-12 Executive Principal Denise DiSpirito, Interim K-12 Principal

VISIT US ON THE WEB

newyorkmills.org



OUR MISSION:

Through combined efforts of students, staff, parents and community members, our mission is to foster the confidence, knowledge, cognition and character necessary to instill a strong work ethic, to create an environment of tolerance and respect and to ignite an attitude of inquiry and enthusiasm for learning that will enable students to become productive, responsible citizens.

DID YOU KNOW?

For the complete District calendar, schedule of upcoming events and more District news, please visit

newyorkmills.org