

# Orchard Park Central School District

## December 2016/January 2017 Community Report

### Orchard Park High School Celebrates Being Named A 2016 National Blue Ribbon School



*Above are pictures from the Orchard Park High School's local National Blue Ribbon Assembly. Pictured on the left: Assemblyman Michael Kearns presents Orchard Park High School Principal, Jonathan Wolf with the 2016 National Blue Ribbon School Plaque. Pictured in the center: Mr. Jonathan Wolf and Superintendent of Schools, Matthew McGarrity are pictured holding the 2016 National Blue Ribbon School Plaque. On the right: Mr Don Lorentz Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce presents Mr. Jonathan Wolf with a Certificate of Recognition from the Chamber of Commerce. For more information about the Orchard Park High School's 2016 National Blue Ribbon Award please see the Superintendent's Column on page 2.*

### Senior Named a Coca-Cola Scholar Semifinalist

Tanner Probst, an Orchard Park High School senior has been named a Semifinalist for the 2017 class of the Coca-Cola Scholars Program. With the 2016 class, the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation will have provided more than 5,700 Scholars nationwide with over \$66 million in scholarships.

"As a premier scholarship provider, we recognize our role in helping young people achieve their college goals," said Mark Davis, President of the Foundation. "The economy continues to affect many students' ability to attend the college of their choice, so it is critical we continue to stay the course. The Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation received nearly 86,000 applications this year, and the Semifinalists are truly some of the most accomplished students in the country."

Tanner Probst ranks with approximately 1,900 high school seniors who are in the running for 150 college scholarships worth \$20,000 each. Students are selected to advance to this next phase based on academic excellence, leadership and service demonstrated in school and community activities. The class of 2017 Coca Cola Scholars will mark the 29<sup>th</sup> consecutive year that the Foundation has awarded scholarships.

**Fall Community Education Brochure Enclosed Pull out and Save  
Center Insert!**

# Superintendent's Column

By: Matthew P. McGarrity

It has been a very exciting fall with the Orchard Park High School being named a National Blue Ribbon School. It is a tribute not only to the teachers, staff and students but to all of our current and former staff, administrators, families and community members.

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has been recognizing great public and private schools for over 30 years. The criteria is based on academic excellence and a school's ability to close the achievement gap among their student subgroups. The United States Department of Education seeks out schools that demonstrate that all their students can achieve high levels of excellence, affirming the hard work of students, teachers and staff, families and a supportive community.

Our National Blue Ribbon celebrations and excitement began in September when Orchard Park High School Principal, Mr. Wolf received information that our high school was named a National Blue Ribbon School. In early



*Mr. Jon Wolf, High School Principal, Mrs. Julie Bastedo, Orchard Park High School English teacher, and Mr. Matthew McGarrity, Superintendent represented Orchard Park High School at the two-day awards ceremony. They are pictured above at the ceremony.*

November Mr. Wolf, high school English teacher, Julie Bastedo and I represented Orchard Park High School by traveling to Washington D.C. to attend the two-day National Blue Ribbon Awards Ceremony. On December 1st the high school locally recognized and celebrated the distinction of receiving the United States 2016 National Blue Ribbon School Award. Juniors and seniors attended an assembly in celebration of Orchard Park High School's National Blue Ribbon status. Freshman and sophomore students watched a live feed of the celebration from their homerooms. Mr. Michael Kearns, NYS Assemblyman, Mr. Brian Poliner, Representative for Erie County Legislator, John Mills, Mr. Michael Kracker, Deputy Chief of Staff, Representative for Congressman Chris Collins and I spoke at the celebration. There were performances by both the High School Wind Ensemble and the Choraliers along with a Blue Ribbon video created by high school students Patrick Johnson, Regan Shanahan and Emily Zhang.

In receiving this honor, it is truly a culmination of our efforts for continued student success district wide. The Orchard Park community is very fortunate to have dedicated teachers, administrators and staff members that work diligently to deliver high quality instruction and services to our students. Because of years of hard work and dedication, our students benefit from a high quality, comprehensive program that excels in academics, music and the arts, athletics and service to the community. Orchard Park High School now joins Eggert Elementary (2007) and South Davis Elementary (2013) Schools as National Blue Ribbon School recipients in Orchard Park.

On behalf of the entire Orchard Park School community, thank you to our teachers, administrators and staff members who over the course of a career have afforded tens of thousands of students an outstanding educational experience. Thank you to our community because without your support we would not be a district with high standards and expectations. Thank you to our students and their families for their dedication and support of public education. We look forward to continuing the tradition and expectation of high standards and excellence in academics, the arts, athletics and service to the community.

# Academy of Finance Holds 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Work-Based Learning Conference

On Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup> the Academy of Finance held its fourth annual Work Based Learning Conference involving 123 students, educators and many local business men and women. The conference was developed to fulfill grade specific requirements within the Academy of Finance's "Work Based Learning" program.

Throughout the day students followed a grade specific schedule that included seminars, hands-on activities, and various speakers. Among the many benefits to students is the development of workplace competencies along with establishing a clear connection between education and work. This conference eliminated the need for our busy students to spend many hours after school in required Academy of Finance activities and also allows a way to consolidate the time commitments many of the Advisory Board members are making to the program. It ensures that our students are getting the skills necessary for the full work based learning continuum of Internship Preparation, Career Awareness, Career Exploration, Internship Achievement & Career Preparation. Students had the opportunity to work directly with Academy teachers, Advisory



*Pictured are Mr. Patrick Loftus, AOF Director; Mrs. Alyssa Wieder, Financial Trust Federal Credit Union & as the Student Run Branch of the Vice-Chairwoman of AOF Advisory Board; Griffin O'Brien, Financial Trust Federal Credit Union Senior & Quaker Vault Student Manager; Mr. Timothy Stalker, Chairman of AOF Advisory Board; Mrs. Missy Szczesniak, Orchard Park High School House 1 Principal; Academy of Finance have been Mr. John Morrison, President & CEO of Financial Trust Federal Credit Union; Marshall Cappelli, Senior and*

*Orchard Park High School cafeteria and was built with the assistance of Repp Construction and Financial Trust over six years ago. In the Spring of 2016 the Branch was "wrapped" to look like a real bank vault and thus renamed the "Quaker Vault" The goal of the student run credit union continues to be to promote financial literacy with high school age students through the opening of real savings accounts. The Academy of Finance opted to dedicate the Branch at the Annual Conference with all our students and local business people in attendance*

The Academy of Finance continues to work toward its mission to graduate students who are knowledgeable of the free enterprise system, have successful careers, contribute positively to their communities, and share their experiences with future generations. The Academy is a partnership of business leaders, academic professionals, parents and Orchard Park High School students. We empower our students through the sharing of information and knowledge with classroom and field experiences.

Board members, National Academy Foundation (NAF) staff and other invited members of our business community in a variety of theme based endeavors. Creating this type of a connection to our larger business community is at the heart of the Academy of Finance program.

A highlight of this year's Work Based Learning Conference was the Grand Re-Opening of the

"Quaker Vault" formerly known as the Student Run Branch of the Financial Trust Federal Credit Union. Financial Trust Federal Credit Union and the Orchard Park High School House 1 Principal; Academy of Finance have been partners for over six years. The student branch is located in the Orchard Park High School cafeteria and was built with the assistance of Repp Construction and Financial

# Students Celebrated Veterans Day throughout the District



*Pictured are Katie and William II Gourlay with their father Major William Gourlay, of the U.S. Air Force Reserves, at Ellicott Elementary's first Veterans Day breakfast. The breakfast was followed by an assembly.*



*Pictured are Maddie Lockwood and Manny Hernandez at Windom Elementary's Annual Veterans Day Assembly holding a banner about the meaning of the poppy.*



*Kindergarten students at South Davis Elementary hold flags as they walk into the Veterans Day Assembly.*



## Buffalo Bills Players Surprise Middle School Student Council

On Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup> Middle School student council students were surprised by an after-school visit from Lorenzo Alexander and Tyrod Taylor of the Buffalo Bills. The players came in to talk to the student council students about being good leaders and representing the Orchard Park Middle School in a positive way. Alexander talked about how it is most important to lead others with your actions rather than just your words. The students had an opportunity to ask the players a variety of questions and the players happily answered their questions whether they were about football or how to go through difficult situations that the students may be facing. One Middle School student asked what is the best way to handle a situation if someone on a sports team makes a bad play and others are upset with them for it. Taylor shared with the students that he would try stand up for the player; he suggested trying to look at the positive in the situation. Not every play is always going to be perfect.



*Pictured above Lorenzo Alexander and Tyrod Taylor of the Buffalo Bills speak to student council students in the Middle School library about good role models.*

## Third Grade Students at South Davis Solve a Mystery



*Third grade boys from South Davis are hard at work to solve the mystery of the missing mystery books while they were on a field trip to the Orchard Park Public Library.*

On November 30<sup>th</sup> third grade students at South Davis Elementary took a walking field trip to the Orchard Park Public Library to go on a Scavenger hunt. The third graders had to solve a mystery. Many of the mystery books had gone missing but luckily the third graders were on the case!

The children began the field trip with a tour given by the children's librarian. The tour included a stop at the Mystery books so she could show the students some of the great Mystery books that are in the library. That is where the mystery began because the Mystery books were missing! Every single one that the librarian wanted to show the students. The third grade students broke up into small groups and were given the task of solving the case of the mysteriously missing mystery books. Each team worked through the scavenger hunt set up for them clue by clue. The scavenger hunt included finding the atlases, investigating the children's computers, and locating specific books by the call number. In the end, the kids cracked the case as they discovered a scarf that had been left behind, a librarian name tag, and a magnifying glass near the information desk. Who moved all of the mystery books? It was the children's librarian.

## Become an Orchard Park Pride Sponsor

The Orchard Park Pride program recognizes outstanding high school seniors for their academic and vocational achievements, character, and leadership. As we acknowledge these young people, we alert the community and area employers to the high quality of our students who are potential employees and we make the students aware of the possibilities available in Orchard Park for future employment.

A committee composed of representatives from the Orchard Park Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, Orchard Park High School, and the community has convened again this year to highlight deserving students and promote links between these students and the local business community.

Ten percent of the senior class will be chosen in January and recognized at a dinner on Thursday, April 27, 2017 in the OPHS cafeteria at 6:15 p.m.

Orchard Park is proud of these students. We are confident that you will want to be part of this important event by becoming a sponsor and sharing your career knowledge with these outstanding youths. As a sponsor, you will be seated with an assigned student and the student's parents. You will also be acknowledged in the dinner program. Sponsors will be provided with biographical information about their student one month prior to the dinner. The \$150.00 sponsorship fee helps defray the cost of dinner for the sponsor, student and parents, as well as the student's award. The limited number of students will be assigned to sponsors in the order in which the reservations are received. If you respond by March 1, 2017, your name will appear in the program and in press releases. Feel free to call Amy See at 209-6272 if you would like additional information or have any questions.

We would like you to be a part of this program and we hope to hear from you soon.

# Fifth Grade Students at South Davis Elementary Partner With P.U.N.T. Foundation

On Tuesday December 20<sup>th</sup> South Davis fifth graders got to see some real holiday spirit. Fifth grade teacher Sarah Flascher coordinated an opportunity for the fifth grade classes at South Davis Elementary to work with the P.U.N.T. Foundation to sponsor a family, who has a young child with leukemia, for the holidays. The mission of the P.U.N.T. Foundation is to provide children affected by cancer and their families with the opportunities and support to enjoy the life for which they fight so hard.



*Pictured above standing are the Pawlaks Nathan, Lynn and Claire. Below is Gwen Mysiak, Executive Director of the P.U.N.T. Foundation, Julie and Kaeden Roth who received the donation and Bridgett Moffett the P.U.N.T. Foundation's Program and Event Coordinator.*

were able to present the sponsored family with the gifts that had been collected.

In attendance were Andrew Pawlak's mother Lynn, sister Claire, and brother Nathan. They were able to be there to see this donation given in memory of Andrew. The Executive Director of the P.U.N.T. Foundation Gwen Mysiak along with Bridgett Moffett, Program and Event Coordinator for the P.U.N.T. Foundation were also able to be there. In addition Julie Roth and her 5-year-old son Kaeden, who suffers from leukemia were able to come in and receive the donation on behalf of their family. Mysiak spoke to the fifth graders about the importance of what these students, their teachers and families had done to donate these gifts and what it will mean to the family receiving them.

After Mysiak spoke a few students presented baskets of toys to Kaeden for him and his siblings while other fifth grade students loaded the gifts that had been collected into the car. The excitement Kaeden had for the items in the basket was truly moving and meant so much to the fifth grade students. It was easy for them to see that donating these gifts will help make the holiday season brighter for this family!

## Petitions for Candidacy on the Board of Education Beginning February 1, 2017

Petitions for school board candidates in the Orchard Park Central School District will be available beginning February 1, 2017 in the Office of the District Clerk, 2240 Southwestern Blvd, West Seneca, between the hours of 7:30 am and 4:00 pm.

To be a qualified candidate for the Board of Education you must be a resident of the district for a least one year prior to the election, a citizen of the United States, at least 18 years of age, able to read and write, and cannot be an employee of the district.

The terms of three trustees on the seven-member school board are up for election, Mr. David Nielsen, Dr. Christine Gray-Tinnesz and Mr. Dwight Mateer. Each term is for three years, July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2020. Candidates must obtain at least 33 valid signatures, which represents two percent of last year's total vote count. Petitions are due in the office of the District Clerk by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, April 17, 2017.

Public voting on the budget is Tuesday, May 16, 2017 from 7 am- 9 pm in the Orchard Park High School Gymnasium. Please use the Freeman Road entrance.



## CDEP Update

By: Lisa Krueger, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Pupil Services

For the past six years, Orchard Park Central School District has enhanced our educational goal-setting progress through the creation and utilization of a Comprehensive District Education Plan (CDEP). The first CDEP began in 2010, and was adopted by the Board of Education in April 2012. This 3-year plan represented the culmination of months of intensive work by representative stakeholders of our school community.

Over the course of the 2012-2015 school years, the CDEP committee reconvened biannually to analyze our progress toward the accomplishment of our goals. CDEP was determined to be an effective tool for our District to aid in focusing resources and priorities and, therefore, we set out to create a new 3-year CDEP in 2015.

Our current CDEP will conclude in 2018, and is focused on excellence in academics, with an emphasis on optimizing a safe and innovative learning environment for our students.

The four goals are:

- Increase and maintain the percentage of students graduating with Advanced Diplomas as identified on the NYS report card to at least 68%.
- Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students will attain their annual growth expectations for literacy and numeracy skills.
- Conduct a district-wide analysis of current Character Education programs and practices including community service, Keeping Kids Safe, Peaceful School Bus, and the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program by June 2016. Develop recommendations to revise Character Education programs and practices based on the outcome of the analysis by December 2016.
- The District Technology Committee will develop and implement a comprehensive plan that includes a timeline and details to address:
  - Expanding student exposure to learning in an online environment;
  - Student access to technology resources outside of the school day;
  - Staff development to effectively incorporate technology to enhance instruction;
  - Resources needed to support the plan (both personnel and equipment/infrastructure).

The CDEP committee regularly meets to analyze our progress toward accomplishing the goals detailed above. Additional information on the District's CDEP plan can be found on our website: [www.opschools.org](http://www.opschools.org).

## Images From Around the District



*Ellicott Elementary donated the funds from their recent coin drive to Veterans One-Stop Center of WNY. The students, parents and staff members at Ellicott raised \$1,030. Pictured above are Mr. Pietrantone, Ellicott Elementary Principal, Mr. Woodworth, CEO of Veterans One-Stop Center of WNY and Ms. Catie Beth Sulski, Ellicott Elementary literacy coach holding a check for the funds collected..*



*Jordan DeMong, a second grade student from Ms. Stifter's class at Windom Elementary smiles for a picture after taste testing her pudding pie! Ms. Stifter's second grade class made pudding pies the day before Thanksgiving recess to get ready for the holiday!*



## Tennis Players Participate in the State Championship



*Pictured are the tennis players who had advanced to the State Championships Madigan Humiston, Kristen Zablonksi and Lauren Karoglan.*

Three weeks of post season play came to an end for the three remaining lady Quakers who had advanced to the NYSPHSA Championships (State Championships) October 28-30 in Port Chester, NY.

The season ended as the three OP players concluded the State Championship tournament. Madigan Humiston lost in the consolation round of the singles tournament ending a strong season and outstanding post-season play.

After losing a close first round match, Zablonksi and Karoglan had an impressive second day, not dropping a set while working their way through the single elimination back draw to achieve their personal best results as a team, winning the consolation tournament. Congratulations to all three tennis players for making it to the State Championships!

## Inclement Weather Procedures

At this time of year it is also very important to be aware of our inclement weather procedures. The decision to close schools is not an easy one to make and often the decision needs to be made quickly and decisively and always in the best interest for the continued safety of our students and staff. We begin the decision process at 4:00 a.m. or sooner, depending on the weather and the forecast. With having more than fifty other locations that we transport students to (BOCES, private schools, special programs), a delayed start is usually not an option for a district our size.

Once the decision is made to close, radio and televisions stations are contacted, the district's web-page is updated and the SchoolMessenger notification is sent out to parents. I would ask that parents to take a few moments to sign into the Parent Portal and review their contact information to make sure that their contact information is up to date. For more information on the Parent Portal and SchoolMessenger please visit our web-page [www.opschools.org](http://www.opschools.org).

The Orchard Park Central School District covers approximately 50 square miles, and much of the area is hilly terrain shaped in a narrow band that stretches south. Because of the land formation, it is common to have varying weather at different ends of the district. So, even though school may not be closed, your decision to keep your child home is quite appropriate if the weather conditions around your home are a safety concern.

If weather turns bad during the school day, students will remain at school until the weather is clear enough to travel. Typically, we begin the dismissal process early, which allows the extra travel time needed in bad weather to get students home - close to the regular time. To increase the potential for older siblings to be home when the younger ones arrive, the dismissal sequence starts with high school students. Middle school dismissal follows, and elementary students are dismissed last. If parents or older siblings cannot be home for the returning youngsters, please make sure your child knows of an alternate place to go, like a specific friend or neighbor's home.

## Physical Education Teachers Participate in Yoga Training



*Physical Education teachers: Kristen McGuinness, Sandy Trampart and Bridget Callahan are pictured above while attending Learn To Teach Children Yoga training.*

Three OPCSD Physical Education Teachers, Bridget Callahan, Kristen McGuinness and Sandy Trampart attended the Learn To Teach Children Yoga training. The training was a three day course to assist/certify our teachers to instruct on the benefits of yoga with children. The course provided self-calming and empowering techniques for children of all ages and abilities. The Physical Education Department is hopeful to integrate these materials into the Orchard Park Central School District Physical Education Curriculum.

## Images From Around the District



*Pictured are Samuel DiBiase, Marissa Torcello and Sara Greenan while they were participating in the Polar Plunge. On Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> 28 Orchard Park High School students took a dip in the 34 degree waters of Lake Erie for the Polar Plunge for the Special Olympics NY. The Orchard Park students raised over \$4,000 for this wonderful cause.*



*Windom Elementary third grader Gabrielle Echeverria poses for a picture after decorating a cookie to look like a turkey during Thanksgiving Centers.*



*Students in Mr. Paternostro's reading class have been collecting items to donate to the TRY Program. TRY stands for Teaching and Restoring Youth. TRY is a transitional housing program with 24 hour supervision for young women. The home offers a loving, structured environment to women who are homeless and suffered from abuse, violence and victimization. Mr. Paternostro thought that it connected well to their reading class because the students were reading a novel that includes a character who bounced from foster home to foster home and eventually left to go out on his own. It was great for the students to make a connection to a local organization that assists young people in a similar situation. Pictured above are several of Mr. Paternostro's reading students: Alena Desiderio, Charlie Fischer, Jerzy Nowak and Maya Clinard holding some of the items that were donated.*



*Fourth graders at Eggert Elementary are pictured working hard to create and build a structure of their choice when Explore & More educators and staff visited Eggert Elementary in December. Explore & More works annually with Eggert Elementary third graders, but they were at Eggert for a special event. Explore & More received a \$1 million dollar capital gift from the Paul A. Saffrin Foundation for the **Play It Forward** capital campaign to build their new museum. The announcement was made from Eggert Elementary. Explore & More will be making the move from their current location in East Aurora to a new museum at Canalside. The new location is scheduled to open in the second half of 2018.*



## In Case You Missed It

*The Community Report is published six times per years and mailed home four times per year. Here are highlights from the Fall 2016 edition which is available online.*



*Members of the Orchard Park Fire Department are pictured above drilling open the school bus to demonstrate how they would remove potential victims after an accident at the live training the Transportation Department attended in October.*



*Mrs. Oesterle's class at Eggert Elementary celebrated the Grand Opening of Mrs. Oesterle's and Mrs. Pitt's Reading Workshop Library in September.*



*Windom Elementary had a successful Reading Invasion at the beginning of the School Year. The entire school "invaded" the back field for 30 minutes to read.*



*Ellicott first graders took a field trip to three local nursing care/assisted living facilities: Peregrine's Landing, Orchard Heights, and Fox Run on Halloween. They paraded in their costumes and sang Halloween songs to the residents.*



*Nine students at OPHS were recognized by the National Merit Scholarship Program, Seven students were named as Commended students and two students were named as Semi-finalists in the 2017 National Merit Scholarship competition.*



*Mr. Chris Mowery, a Rachel's Challenge staff member shared Rachel's story with South Davis Elementary at their Rachel's Challenge Kick Off assembly in September.*

## Five Seniors Sign Letters of Intent



*Pictured from left to right above are Mitchell Smith who will be playing golf at Mercyhurst University next year, Hailey Baun, who will be playing soccer at Cornerstone University, Olivia Sapio who will be swimming at the University at Buffalo, Katrina Wardner who will be swimming at St. Bonaventure University and Aryana Dreyer who will be playing soccer at Daemen College. the students posed for a picture after signing their letters of intent.*

Five Orchard Park High School seniors signed their national letters of intent to play their sports at the college level. The seniors signed their letters at a signing ceremony at the Orchard Park High School on Tuesday, November 29<sup>th</sup>.

Hailey Baun plans to attend Cornerstone University to play soccer next year. Hailey has been playing soccer for 13 years. She began playing in house soccer and has since played for OP travel teams, Global Premier and is currently playing for her second year with the Hamburg Monarchs. Hailey enjoys the fitness and social aspects of soccer in addition to the competition and working to improve as a team and as an individual player. Hailey chose to attend Cornerstone University as she was seeking a smaller faith based private school. Hailey plans to study special education and in the past has enjoyed assisting in the Topsoccer program working with children and teenagers with special needs.

Aryana Dreyer plans to attend Daemen College to play soccer next fall. She has been playing for nine years. Aryana has played for Flash Academy and currently plays for Empire United Soccer Academy. She loves meeting people through soccer and loves that the sport is really a team experience. Aryana is looking forward to attending Daemen College next year. She chose Daemen because she wanted to play for a coach that shared the same philosophy and values that she has and who would appreciate her soccer skills and competitive spirit.

Olivia Sapio plans to swim at the University of Buffalo next year. Olivia has been swimming for the past eight years. She began swimming with the Town Wreckers Swim Team also known as TWST. Olivia loves the racing involved in swimming and getting to spend time with her teammates. Olivia is looking forward to the close knit team aspect at the University of Buffalo. Olivia plans to major in Accounting when she gets to the University at Buffalo.

Mitchell Smith plans to play golf at Mercyhurst University next year. He started playing golf when he was 12 years old. Since that time he has played on the Orchard Park High School Varsity golf team since he was in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Mitchell finished his high school golf career this fall as the #1 player in the ECIC rankings and led the OP Varsity golf team to their 4<sup>th</sup> straight ECIC championship. Mitchell loves the mental part of the game of golf; staying in the present and not thinking about anything else. Mitchell is looking forward to attending Mercyhurst University and enrolling in the 4+1 Masters Program. Mitchell felt Mercyhurst gave him everything he was looking for: academics and faculty, golf team and coach, campus amenities and student life as well as a convenient location.

Katrina Wardner plans to swim at St. Bonaventure University next year. She began swimming when she was six years old at Eagle Ridge. For the past ten years she has continued swimming on the Town Wreckers Swim Team in Orchard Park. Katrina has made some of her closest friends through swimming. She has always wanted to swim during college and feels that being on a team she will be associated with a group of good people who can support her throughout her college experience. Katrina decided to attend St. Bonaventure because the school will offer her great opportunities both athletically and academically. At St. Bonaventure Katrina plans to major in Sports Medicine.

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## A Word From The Board of Education President

This fall the Orchard Park high school was designated a blue ribbon school by the US Department of Education. This program was created in 1982 to recognize schools that have achieved high levels of academic excellence and whose students thrive and excel. This year our high school is the only newly designated school in Western New York and joins both Eggert Road Elementary (2007) and South Davis Elementary (2013) as being named blue ribbon schools. This is a very competitive program and shows the commitment that the faculty and staff as well as the parents have to continually improve the academic performance of all of the students in the high school.

At the board meeting on November 8<sup>th</sup>, the school board recognized seven students who were named as commended students in the 2017 national merit scholarship program.: Matthew Chiavetta, Joseph Even, Erin O'Rourke, Lauren Smith, Cole Wilkinson, Emily Zhang and Adam Ziccardi. The students placed among the top 5% of more than 1.6 million students who took the 2015 preliminary SAT. We also recognize two students who scored in the top 1% and thus named semifinalists in the national merit program: Tanner Probst and Hope VanDerwater. These two talented high school seniors now have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7500 national alert scholarships worth about \$33 million that will be offered in the springtime.



*Pictured are eight of the nine members of "Hugs for Hope" along with Lyn Phillips of Comforting Hugs.*

At the October board meeting we recognized nine students for their efforts to redecorate a room at the Ronald McDonald house. the Ronald McDonald house is a place for families to stay while a child is in the hospital undergoing treatment. The students raised an impressive \$3000 which was then matched by the Comforting Hug's foundation. The students then spent a week im-

plementing their design called 'Buffalo – Canalside'.

As a community, we should be proud of what we've seen from our students over the past several months. They have shown they are capable of performing not just academically but also in leadership, sportsmanship, and in the desire to be involved in the larger world around them. The goal of a sound public education is to prepare students for life outside of school and based on what I have seen from the students over the past several months, I think they understand that.

As always, I recommend that you visit the district website and come to the Board of Education meetings to learn more about the district offerings, community impact and challenges.



Board of Education meetings are held at 7 p.m. at the District Offices, 2240 Southwestern Blvd. West Seneca unless otherwise indicated. Additional work sessions may be scheduled, as needed throughout the year. Meetings are open to the public.

January 10, 2017,

February 7, 2017,

March 14, 2017,

March 28, 2017,

April 4, 2017,

May 2, 2017,

May 16, 2017 - District Budget Vote  
at the High School,

June 13, 2017.

## Orchard Park Central Schools Board of Education

Orchard Park, New York 14127

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# Resident

## January

4...EG PTO Meeting, 9:30 a.m.  
5...WE PTO Meeting, 6 p.m.  
5...EL PTO Meeting, 6:30 p.m.  
5...SD PTO Meeting, 6:30 p.m.  
7...ECMEA Jazz, Elementary & Jr. High  
Chorus Auditions  
10...Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m.  
11...MS PTO Meeting, 9 a.m.  
11...Board of Education Work Session, 5 p.m.  
13...K-8 Half-Day, Elementary Students  
Dismiss at 11:30 a.m. Middle School  
Students Dismiss at 10:30 a.m.  
13...HS Early Dismissal, 12:45 p.m.  
14...ECMEA Jr. High Instrumental Auditions  
14...Winter Driver Education Registration,  
8 a.m.  
16...Martin Luther King Day – No School  
16...WE Niagara Candy Sale Begins  
17...Winter/Spring Walk-In Community  
Education Registration, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.  
18...Winter/Spring Walk-In Community  
Education Registration, 6 p.m.-8 p.m.  
18...MS 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Concert, 7 p.m.  
19...Special Education 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent  
Scheduling Night, 7 p.m.  
20...WE Winter Family Skate Night,  
5 p.m. – 7 p.m.  
21...Board of Education Work Session, 8 a.m.  
21...ECMEA Senior High Auditions  
23...STAP Comm Meeting, 7 p.m.  
24-27...HS Local/Regents Exams  
26...MS/HS Jazz Concert, 7 p.m.  
26-27... WE Operetta, 7 p.m.  
27...SD Niagara Candy Sale Begins  
27...WE Niagara Candy Sale Ends

30...Winter Community Education Classes  
Begin

## February

2...WE PTO Meeting, 6 p.m.  
3...CCPTO Meeting, 9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.  
3...EL Chocolate Sale Begins  
6-10...MS Yearbook Sale  
6-10...WE Box Tops Contest  
7...Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m.  
7...SD PTO Meeting, 9:30 a.m.  
7...EL PTO Meeting, 6:30 p.m.  
8...HS Winter Choral Concert, 7 p.m.  
8...MS PTO Meeting, 9 a.m.  
10...Festival of Bands, 7 p.m.  
11...HS Winter Homecoming Dance, 8 p.m.  
13-14...EG Operetta, 7 p.m.  
13...STAP Comm Meeting, 7 p.m.  
14-15...EL Operetta, 7 p.m.  
15-16...SD Operetta, 7 p.m. at MS  
15...WE Square 1 Art Orders Due  
16...EG Math & Science Night, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.  
17...K-8 Half Day Elementary Students  
Dismiss at 11:30 a.m. Middle School  
Students Dismiss at 10:30 a.m.  
17...HS Early Dismissal, 12:45 p.m.  
17...SD Niagara Candy Sale Ends  
20-24...Mid-Winter Recess – No School  
27...HS PTO Meeting, 7 p.m.  
28...EL Chocolate Sale Ends

## March

1...HS Spring College Night, 7 p.m.  
1...EG PTO Meeting, 6:30 p.m.  
2...EL Dr. Seuss Day  
2...WE PTO Meeting, 6 p.m.  
2...EL PTO Meeting, 6:30 p.m.  
2...SD PTO Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

3-4...NYSBDA Honor Band Symposium  
3...SD Family Fun Night, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.  
3...MS 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Activity Night, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.  
4...Elementary ECMEA Rehearsal,  
7:45 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.  
5...WE Family Movie Event, 1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.  
7...District Orchestra Concert, 7 p.m.  
8...Elementary ECMEA Rehearsal,  
2:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.  
8... MS PTO Meeting, 9 a.m.  
9...District Band Concert, 7 p.m.  
10...Elementary Report Cards Available  
10-11...ECMEA Jazz Festival  
10...Elementary ECMEA Rehearsal,  
11:45 a.m. – 5:15 p.m. at Kleinhans  
10...Superintendent's Conference Day –  
No Student Attendance  
11...Elementary ECMEA Performance  
1:30 p.m. & 4 p.m. at Kleinhans  
14...Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m.  
16-18...HS Musical, 7:30 p.m.  
16...Project Know Parent Information Night,  
7 p.m. at SD  
17-18...ECMEA Jr. High Festival  
17...EG Shamrock Night, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.  
19...HS Musical, 2:30 p.m.  
20...HS STAP Comm Meeting, 7 p.m.  
22...Project Know Girls Night, 7 p.m. at MS  
23...Project Know Boys Night, 7 p.m. at MS  
27...HS PTO Meeting, 7 p.m.  
28...Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m.  
28-30...NYS ELA Assessments  
30...HS Bald for Bucks, 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.  
30...HS AP Information Night, 7 p.m.  
31...EL Family Fun Night, 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.  
31...Middle School Musical, 7 p.m.