Pittsford
School District News

Winter 2025

A publication for the residents of Pittsford Central School District

2026 Capital Project and Long-Range Facilities Planning

On March 5, 2026, the Pittsford Central School District (PCSD) community will have the opportunity to vote on a **$48.7 million Capital Project** referendum with **no increase to the tax levy**. The project is designed to address priority infrastructure needs identified in the New York State – mandated Building Condition Survey (BCS). This project will help preserve, enhance and protect the District's facilities while supporting the District's commitment to continuous improvement and excellence in education. Every decision has been guided by responsible financial planning and a focus on minimizing the impact on taxpayers.

Project Scope
The proposed Capital Project focuses on essential repairs, upgrades and modernizations to maintain a safe and efficient learning environment for students and staff.



(Continued on page 2)

Park Road Elementary School Principal Named



Maurin Jeffries was named the Principal of **Park Road Elementary School**. Jeffries comes to Pittsford from the Allendale Columbia School where she served as Head of Lower School (childcare through grade 5). Previously she was an assistant principal and principal in the Brighton and Fairport school districts. She also held elementary school teaching positions.

Jeffries holds a bachelor's degree in early childhood education and a master's degree in reading education from Boston University. Her administration certificate is from SUNY Brockport.

She started her new position on November 3rd.

Board of Education Budget Development Meeting Schedule

The development of a school district's budget is a thoughtful, year-long, multi-faceted process. It includes careful long-term planning, budget preparation, presentation, review by the Board of Education and community members, formal budget adoption, further sharing with the community, and Board election. During this process there are a variety of meetings held by the Board of Education including Budget Work Sessions which are used by the Board of Education to gather information and ask questions about particular sections of the budget.

The Pittsford Central School District community is invited and encouraged to attend and observe these sessions as they are open to the public. Community members will have the opportunity to comment at the subsequent regular Board of Education meetings.

All meetings take place in the Barker Road Middle School McCluski Room. The May 19, 2026 Budget Vote is at Calkins Road Middle School.

Tuesday, February 3, 6 - 7 p.m.
Budget Work Session

Tuesday, February 24, 6 - 7 p.m.
Budget Work Session

Tuesday, March 10, 6 - 7 p.m.
Budget Work Session

Tuesday, April 14, 7 - 9 p.m.
Budget Adoption and Regular Board of Education Meeting

Tuesday, May 5, 5:30 - 7 p.m.
PTSA Meet the Board of Education Candidates Night

Tuesday, May 12, 7 p.m.
Budget Hearing and Regular Board of Education Meeting

Tuesday, May 19, 7 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Budget Vote and Board Election
at Calkins Road Middle School
Voter identification is required

Superintendent Cutaia Delivers First Power Hour of the Year: "Shaping Our Schools Together"



At the first Power Hour of the 2025-26 school year on October 21, members of the Pittsford community gathered to hear from Shana Cutaia who assumed the role of Superintendent of Pittsford Schools on December 1, 2025. During the session, Cutaia shared insights about her transition into the position, addressed areas of interest expressed by attendees, and facilitated a collaborative feedback process to help inform her work as the District's next superintendent.

Topics of interest included academic achievement and rigor, internet safety and artificial intelligence, and sustainability practices.

During the hour-long discussion, Cutaia emphasized that academic rigor will remain a cornerstone of Pittsford's educational philosophy. As the community continues to evolve, now with more than 500 District families speaking a language other than English at home, she highlighted the importance of providing a culturally responsive approach with the right resources in place to meet diverse student needs.

Safety, she said, will also continue to be a top priority. That commitment extends beyond physical safety to include the social and emotional well-being of students. Measures such as fortified entryways, continuous infrastructure maintenance and video monitoring systems are complemented by the District's internet policies and protections that help ensure online safety and allow PCSD to stay ahead of emerging technological risks.

(Continued on page 2)

Pittsford CSD Establishes Framework for Ethical and Effective AI Use in Education



As technology continues to evolve, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming an increasingly important tool in education. The Pittsford Central School District (PCSD) recognizes the potential of AI to enhance learning, streamline operations, and foster creativity. Therefore, the District is committed to ensuring that AI is used ethically, responsibly, and in ways that uphold the core values of education, equity, and human connection.

To support this commitment, Pittsford Schools has developed a resource entitled "Guidelines for the Appropriate Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Pittsford Central School District." It addresses considerations when using AI; the appropriate use by faculty, staff and students; how to ensure compliance with New York State Education Law 2D; and ways PCSD will monitor AI and its use. "This resource serves to empower staff and students to harness the benefits of AI, while also maintaining academic integrity, safeguarding privacy and fostering critical thinking," said Superintendent Pero.

To read the PCSD AI guidance in its entirety, please visit AI Guidance - Pittsford Schools (*pittsfordschools.org/departments/technology-and-data-services/ai-guidance*).

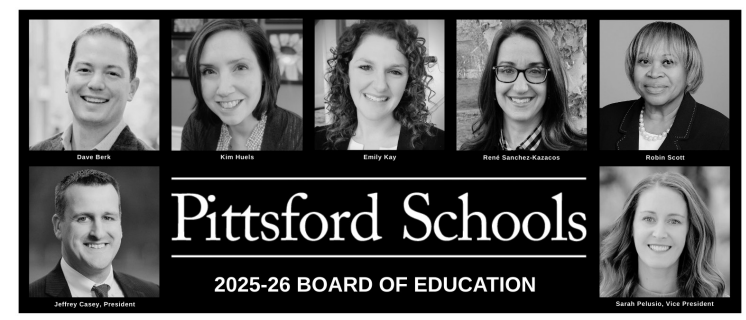
Honoring our Board of Education: Champions for Students, Partners for Progress

The Pittsford Central School District joined schools across New York State in celebrating School Board Recognition Week on October 13-17. This annual observance honors the people who serve on Boards of Education for their commitment, leadership, and advocacy on behalf of students and their communities.

Pittsford's Board of Education is comprised of seven exceptional individuals who volunteer their time, energy, and expertise to help guide the vision and direction of our District: Jeffrey Casey, President; Sarah Pelusio, Vice President; Dave Berk, Kim Huels, Emily Kay, René Sanchez-Kazacos, and Robin Scott

"As superintendent, I saw firsthand the dedication of our Board members. They make thoughtful, informed decisions that help shape our educational programs, support staff, and enhance the student experience," said former superintendent Michael Pero, who retired on December 1st. "Their work extends far beyond attending meetings. It involves studying budgets, reviewing policies, advocating for resources, and ensuring that every decision aligns with our District's mission to inspire and prepare students to be their best, do their best, and make a difference in the lives of others," he said. In addition, Board of Education members commit to visiting one of Pittsford's nine schools monthly at 7:30 am to talk with staff and to assess any capital project needs.

Board members also play a vital role in strengthening the partnership between Pittsford Schools and the community. By engaging in long-term planning, setting academic and fiscal priorities, and upholding high standards for achievement, our Board ensures that Pittsford CSD remains a place where all students can thrive.



Homecoming Highlights



Pittsford's Homecoming week (October 6-11) was full of school spirit and community pride. The Friday night football game was an exciting match-up that came down to the wire, with Penfield taking a 27–21 win in overtime. While the scoreboard didn't land in our favor, the energy, pride, and community spirit in the stands were second to none.

That Pittsford pride continued as alumni were recognized during the 2025 Pittsford Schools Athletics Hall of Fame induction ceremony. Congratulations to this year's inductees: Ashley Cerniglia, Danny Mendick, and Joe Thyroff. Up next was the homecoming parade down Main Street on Saturday, October 11. Despite the rain, Pittsford families excitedly lined the streets with umbrellas open and rain jackets zipped, including one worn by a very happy and dry dog.

(2026 Capital Project - continued from page 1)

This scope represents a portion of the broader BCS recommendations and includes improvements at multiple school sites:

- Roof replacements and protective coatings
- Boiler steam plant and MHS water line replacements
- Replacement of public address systems and installation of emergency generators
- Addition of air conditioning in large group instruction areas/areas of assembly
- Corridor floor tile abatement and replacement
- Parking lot repaving
- Replacement of chillers and reduced pressure zone (RPZ) devices
- Replacement of playground equipment

Tax Impact

This $48.7 million Capital Project has been strategically scheduled to align with the retirement of existing debt as part of the District's long-range financial plan. Therefore, the project will be funded by capital reserves, state aid and level debt, yielding no increase to the tax levy as a result of this proposal.

Leveraging State Aid

New York State provides building aid to help districts maintain and improve their facilities. For eligible capital improvement projects, the state reimburses a large portion of project costs. For PCSD, approximately 72.7% of eligible expenses will be reimbursed by New York State, reducing the local share and maximizing the value of every taxpayer dollar.

These State funds are available only for approved capital projects, making this an important opportunity to invest in the future of our schools while taking full advantage of available aid.

Community Engagement

The District invites all residents to learn more about the proposed project at a **Public Information Forum on Tuesday, January 27, 2026**, from 6:30–7:30 p.m. in the Calkins Road Middle School Commons.

Please mark your calendar for the **Capital Project Vote on Thursday, March 5, 2026**, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the Calkins Road Middle School Gymnasium.

For additional information, project plans and ongoing updates, please visit *pittsfordschools.org/2026CapitalProject*

("Shaping Our Schools Together" - continued from page 1)

The final topic of discussion centered on sustainability. Cutaia shared that participation in school meal programs has significantly increased as a result of New York State's Universal Free Meals program, with breakfast participation rising from less than 1% to 36%, and lunch participation increasing from 29% to 59%. This increase brings new challenges, including food waste management, which the District and its Sustainability Committee are addressing through expanded recycling and composting initiatives in school cafeterias.

As she steps into the role of Superintendent, Cutaia noted that her entry plan will focus on gathering input from students, staff and the community, along with analyzing key data to guide decisions that ensure continued success for Pittsford Schools and its students.

You can view this Power Hour and previous recordings on the Student Services' page of the District's website at: *pittsfordschools.org/departments/student-services/programs*. Join us for the next Power Hour at Calkins Road Middle School on January 27 at 6:30 p.m.

Fall Sports Wrap-Up

Pittsford varsity athletes demonstrated exceptional skill and teamwork throughout the Fall 2025 season, capturing multiple Section V team championship titles and earning individual honors across a variety of sports. Several teams and athletes have advanced to state-level competitions, with results continuing to unfold at the time of this newsletter's publication.

For complete season results, visit the Athletics webpage at *www.pittsfordschools.org*

Section V Team Champions

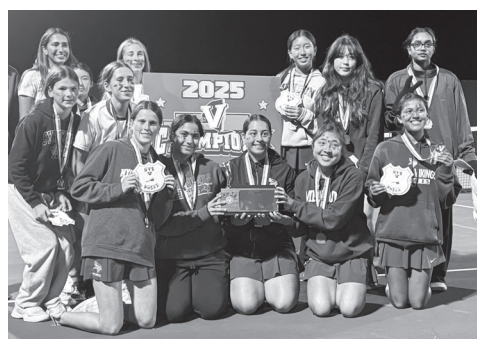
- Mendon Boys Cross Country
- Mendon Girls Cross Country
- Mendon Field Hockey
- Mendon Boys Soccer
- Pittsford Girls Swimming and Diving
- Mendon Girls Tennis
- Sutherland Girls Volleyball

Section V Individual Champions

- Merrick Bathgate, Sutherland Girls Cross Country
- Jamie Kotalik, Panthers Girls Diving
- Ryan Mehan, Mendon Boys Cross Country

State Champions

- Lexi Lombard, Sarah Kunze, Molly Bennett and Lillian Orlando, 400 Free Relay, Girls Swimming and Diving Diving









Esteemed Soccer Jersey #9 Conferred upon Danny Coyne in Honor of Alum Todd Pelino



Mendon High School junior and soccer captain Danny Coyne was selected to wear the storied #9 jersey this fall, a tradition that honors alumnus Todd Pelino, who was killed in the 9/11 attacks while working at the World Trade Center. Each year, teammates and coaches choose a player to carry on Pelino's legacy, and this fall, that honor goes to Coyne.

The jersey number was officially handed down to Coyne during a September 16, 2025, pregame ceremony honoring Pelino's memory and legacy. Being chosen for this honor underscores a player's strength of character and leadership. "Danny is an outstanding leader and player who is respected by his peers and coaches," said Mendon varsity coach Mark Hurley.

The #9 jersey serves as a lasting tribute to Pelino, a standout player remembered not only for his skill on the field but also for his scholarship, leadership and character. Carrying on that tradition, this year's honoree sees the jersey as a powerful reminder of the values Pelino embodied. "To me the #9 jersey is a lot more than just a jersey number. It represents all the characteristics that Todd Pelino displayed," said Coyne. "It is an incredible honor to wear the #9 to represent Todd and his values. I wear it with the utmost pride and respect."

Notice of Fire Inspection

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the annual inspection of the buildings of the Pittsford Central School District for fire hazards which might endanger the lives of students, teachers and employees therein, has been completed and the report thereof is available at the Office of Operations, Maintenance & Security, 100 Mendon Center Road, for inspection by all interested persons.

Jeffrey R. Beardsley, *Director of Operations, Maintenance & Security*

Fiscal Stewardship Award Underscores Priorities for 2026-27 Budget Guidelines

As Pittsford Central School District begins its annual budget planning process, the District is pleased to announce that it has earned national recognition with the 2025 cashVest® 90+ Award—a distinction reserved for public institutions that demonstrate exemplary financial management and responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars. The award is presented only to organizations that achieve a cashVest score of 90 or higher for four consecutive quarters, a benchmark Pittsford reached through rigorous, data-driven liquidity oversight.

This national recognition underscores Pittsford's ongoing commitment to maximizing taxpayer value and directly supports the priorities outlined in the District's 2026–27 budget guidelines.

2026-27 Budget Guidelines

These guidelines have been developed by the District Planning Team and approved by the Board of Education.

Develop a student-based budget focused on:

- Implementation of rigorous, engaging, equitable and authentic curriculum, instruction, assessments, and resources.
- Maintain excellence while supporting responsive and relevant offerings.
- Providing experiences, both curricular and extracurricular, that support the varied interests and abilities of the whole child.
- Supporting the diverse academic, social-emotional and mental health needs of all students.

Provide high quality professional development centered on:

- Tiered supports, addressing the range of learners in classroom.
- Curriculum, assessment, grading and instructional practices.
- Technology to promote efficiency, digital citizenship and academic achievement.
- Equity and inclusion practices aligned with District goals.
- Social-emotional, wellness and mental health topics.
- Continuous improvement for instructional and non-instructional staff members.

Balance the investment in education with sensitivity to limited community resources by:

- Balancing community expectations for services and programs, with the need to be cognizant of changes in property values, income levels, new state/federal tax laws and fluctuating economic landscape.
- Engaging in thoughtful short- and long-range financial planning.
- Sustaining transportation reserve for transition to electric buses/vehicles.
- Engaging legislators to increase NYS foundation aid.
- Recruiting, hiring and retaining diverse employees of the highest caliber.
- Seeking cost efficiencies to further mitigate the burdensome and fiscal impact of underfunded and unfunded mandates.

Maintain fiscal stability now and into the future through:

- Financially prudent and sustainable reserve accounts.
- Reviewing and adjusting staffing to align with revenue sources.
- Collaboration with local partners/districts to share services.
- Protecting and maintaining our Aa1 bond rating.
- Protecting the community's investment in facilities and infrastructure while continuing to enhance air cooling systems and quality of air.
- Advocacy with legislators relative to appropriate levels of funding.
- Implementing research-based sustainability practices.

Meet legal mandates and contractual obligations.

Winter 2025

Board of Education Honors Pittsford Pride Recipients

Nine students received the Pittsford Pride Citizenship Recognition Award during the November 4, 2025, Board of Education Meeting for demonstrating excellent citizenship and positive leadership. Congratulations to the following students:

John Dean, Gr. 12, Sutherland High School; **Spriha Dhakal**, Gr. 5, Mendon Center Elementary School; **Aleah Engel**, Gr. 5, Allen Creek Elementary School; **Lorenzo Geminiani-Vega**, Gr. 12, Mendon High School; **Jordan Narvaez**, Gr. 6, Barker Road Middle School; **Isla Pritchard**, Gr. 5, Thornell Road Elementary School; **Ben Sheehan**, Gr. 8, Calkins Road Middle School; **Gurbaj Singh**, Gr. 5, Park Road Elementary School; **Owen Vuittonet**, Gr. 2, Jefferson Road Elementary School



43 Students Recognized in National Merit® Scholarship Program

Congratulations to the 17 semifinalists and 26 commended students recognized in the 2026 National Merit® Scholarship Program.

Semifinalists represent less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors and will advance in the competition for a chance to win one of 6,930 scholarships. While commended students will not advance in the competition, they are recognized for their outstanding potential for academic success.

MENDON HIGH SCHOOL:

Semifinalists

Jay Biswas, Kevin Curran, Evan Dai, William Harrington, Jacob Ho, Karthik Jaligama, Ishaan Ramesh, Rain Royce, Yiding Zuo

Commended Students

Daniel R. Brown, Leixi Chen, Rohan Chwalek, Akaash Ejantkar, Suriya Gandhi, Soumya Gupta, Sienna Hughes, Colin Macpherson, Stanislav Nadler, Avery Nelson, Eleanor Noronha, Ognjen Oluic, Omika Patel, Leon Ye, Musa Zafar, Evan Zavalo

SUTHERLAND HIGH SCHOOL:

Semifinalists

Jamie Lyn Earley, Ronit Gevarghese, Mary Minnella, Ryan Shaffer, Michael Shi, Weijun Wang, Ziao Wang, Anderson Warner

Commended Students

Nathan Andolina, Vivian Crane, Charlie Haynes, Theodore Haynes, Adela Huang, Kylie Joseph, Sathya Mandava, Paulina Stefanos, Tejasvi Vijay, Jeremiah Yaar

Therapy Dog Maya Supports Student Wellness

Certified therapy dog Maya was a big hit with students in Sutherland High School's grade 9 English class when she dropped in for a visit this fall. Accompanied by social worker Dave Pascarella, Maya helped provide a comfortable environment for students to explore mental health themes in a book they are reading.

Since the Pittsford Central School District approved its therapy dog policy three years ago, Maya has become a beloved part of the Sutherland community. She is joined by eight other lucky therapy dogs in the District. With their affectionate and calming personalities, Pittsford's therapy dogs show that small acts of comfort can make a big difference in supporting mental health and connection.



Pittsford Schools Launches Student-Athlete CPR Training Program

Pittsford Central School District has launched a pilot program to train student athletes in CPR, First Aid and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) use. Fourteen varsity athletes have already received training from some of Pittsford Schools' Red Cross-certified coaches, and the pilot program will expand to winter and spring sports, with long-term plans to include JV and modified levels.

"This program is about more than athletics," said Superintendent Michael Pero. "We are empowering our student athletes to be ready to act in an emergency, whether that's on the field, at school or in everyday life."

Spectators had the opportunity to participate in emergency response training at the September 26 home football game thanks to a partnership with Rochester Regional Health (RRH). Fans enjoyed learning and practicing basic life-saving skills at the emergency training stations set up during the game.





Parental Notice: Student Weight Status Category Reporting

As part of a required school health examination, a student's weight and height are measured, and a body mass index (BMI) is calculated to help determine if a student's weight is in a healthy range. NYS Education Law requires a weight status group be included as part of the student's school health examination. Pittsford Central School District has been selected by NYS to report Student Weight Status Category information. Only summary information will be sent, and no names or information about individual students will be included. The information used for this survey is from 2024-25 school-year physicals for grades K, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11. You may choose to have your child(ren)'s information excluded from this report by calling your child(ren)'s school nurse.

On Stage this Winter…

MHS Mini-Musical: Ride the Cyclone High School Edition

December 12 at 7pm

December 13 at 2pm & 7pm

Tickets cost $12 for all (general admission)

dramaclubmhs.ludus.com/200498809

Tickets are available at the door before the shows (cash or check only)

SHS Musical: Footloose

January 15 & 16 at 7pm

January 17 at 2pm & 7pm

Tickets cost $12 for students, 65+, and military; $15 for adults

Tickets go on sale December 1

shsmusicals.ludus.com/200502767

Tickets are available at the door before the shows (cash or check only)

CRMS 7/8 Musical: Shrek

February 5 & 6 at 7pm

February 7 at 2pm & 7pm

Tickets cost $12 for all

Tickets will be on sale January 2026

Tickets are available at the door before the shows (cash or check only)

Pittsford Middle School Musicians Shine in Hochstein's Junior Wind Symphony

Congratulations to the 20 talented band students from Barker Road and Calkins Road middle schools who participated in the Junior Wind Symphony at the Hochstein School!

Over the course of six weeks, these young musicians dedicated their time and talent to rehearsing under the direction of Hochstein faculty, advancing their ensemble skills and broadening their musical experience beyond the classroom.

Their hard work culminated in a concert performance on October 18, where they showcased their progress and passion for music before an enthusiastic audience of family and friends.



Call for Nominations - Pittsford PTSA Life Membership Award

PTSA everychild. onevoice.

Now is the time to recognize those special individuals (teachers, staff, coaches, parents, community members) who go above and beyond in supporting our students.

The Pittsford PTSA invites you to help honor an individual who makes our school community a better place by nominating them for the 2026 Pittsford PTSA Life Membership Award. The NYS PTA Honorary Life Membership Award acknowledges members of the community who have gone above and beyond normal job or volunteer expectations in serving Pittsford youth.

Recipients are chosen by a committee of PTSA leaders from nominees submitted by the wider Pittsford community. Nominees must have demonstrated dedication to the youth of Pittsford in three categories:

- **Volunteer efforts** and/or significant contributions above and beyond normal job expectations over an extended period of time.
- **Outstanding personal qualities** that have enabled the nominee to serve as a role model for youth.
- **Ongoing availability and willingness** to serve the needs of youth, directly or in an administrative capacity.

To make a nomination and for more information, visit the Pittsford PTSA website at *pittsfordptsa.net/lifemembershipaward*. Nominations are due by February 13. A ceremony to honor recipients is scheduled for April 23.

Rainbow Classic Celebrates 25 Years of Supporting the Golisano Children's Hospital

Join us on December 19th for the 25th Annual Rainbow Classic basketball games as cross-town rivals Mendon and Sutherland high schools take to the court to benefit Golisano Children's Hospital. The games begin at 6 p.m. at the University of Rochester Palestra. **Tickets go on sale December 8 and will be available online.**

RAINBOW CLASSIC DETAILS

Friday, December 19, 2025

- University of Rochester Palestra
- Girls Varsity 6 p.m. | Boys Varsity 8 p.m.

TICKETS

- $12 advance-sale tickets only, beginning Dec. 8 at *gofan.co/event/5427175?schoolId=NY93335*
- **Both games will be livestreamed and available to spectators unable to attend**

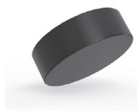
Teddi Bowl Unites Football and Community to Support Camp Good Days



The Pittsford Panthers kicked off the 2025 High School Football Season in a game against the Victor Blue Devils for the 7th Annual Teddi Bowl to benefit Camp Good Days and Special Times on September 4 at St. John Fisher University.

As part of the tradition, campers from Camp Good Days took the field as honorary coaches and cheerleaders, creating unforgettable memories. On the scoreboard, Pittsford came away with a 27–17 win over Victor, but the real victory was the community's support for Camp Good Days and its mission to support children and families affected by cancer and sickle cell anemia.

Jan. 31 Pink the Rink Hockey Games Support Breast Cancer Research



Join us on Saturday, Jan. 31 for the 16th Annual Pink the Rink Hockey Games benefitting the Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester! The games will take place at Tim Horton's Iceplex, with the JV game at 5 p.m. followed by the Varsity game at 6:30 p.m. Check the Pittsford Schools website at *www.pittsfordschools.org* for ticket information.

The Pittsford Central School District does not discriminate in access, admission, employment, or treatment of participants in any of its programs and activities on the basis of race, religion, age, sex, color, handicapping condition, or ethnic or national origin. This is in compliance with Title IX, OCR Guidelines, and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations. Inquiries regarding compliance issues may be addressed to: Shawn Clark, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, Administration Building, Pittsford Central Schools, 75 Barker Road, Pittsford, New York 14534.

State and National Award Winning Publication

NSPRA National School Public Relations Association

PRSA Public Relations Society of America

Pittsford Central Schools
75 Barker Road, East Wing
Pittsford, NY 14534
(585) 267-1000
pittsfordschools.org

Superintendent
Shana Cutaia

Board of Education
Jeffrey Casey, President
Sarah Pelusio, Vice President
Dave Berk
Kim Huels
Emily Kay
René Sanchez-Kazacos
Robin Scott

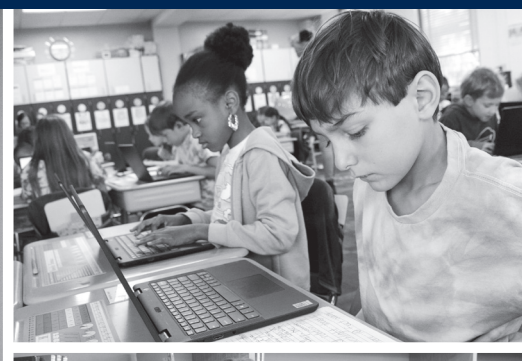
Director of Communication
Nancy Chaput Wayman, APR

Sr. Communication Specialist
Laurie Everhart

Photographer
Susan Kost

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Pittsford, NY
Permit No. 12







Pittsford School District News

Winter 2025

- 2026-27 Budget Planning
- March 5 Capital Project Referendum
- Park Road Elementary School Principal Hired
- Artificial Intelligence Guidelines for Education
- Fall Sports Wrap-up
- Student-Athlete CPR Training Program Launched
- Student Activities and Achievements