

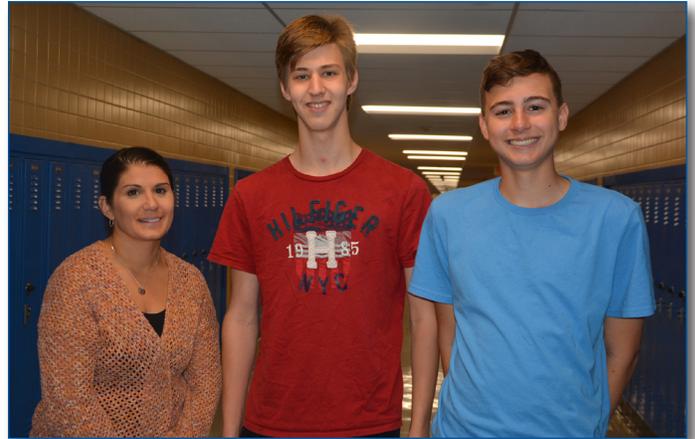
## Two National Merit finalists

Congratulations to seniors Alexander Peterson and Matthew Sovik on earning finalist status in the 2020 National Merit Scholarship competition.

Approximately 1.6 million students who enter the competition by taking the PSAT/National Merit qualifying test and meeting other requirements. Of those students, just 15,000 are named finalists.

Some 7,500 finalists will be offered scholarships beginning in March.

After graduation, Alex plans to study biochemistry, and Matt plans on majoring in economics or business. At the time of this newsletter, both were still waiting to hear from colleges.



*Left to right: Kris Earl, High School interim principal, and National Merit finalists Alexander Peterson and Matthew Sovik.*

## Capital improvement project update

With work on the first two portions of the district-wide capital improvement project approved by voters in 2017 complete, the High School portion of the project is now in full swing.

We call the project Horseheads 2030: Building Our Future Now. This \$94.6 million project is the first in a series of projects set to improve district facilities and enhance instruction.

The completed work in the first two portions included a new parking lot at Gardner Road, new playground and security fence at Ridge Road, new roof at Big Flats and Center Street, and significant district-wide technology improvements in the areas of instructional technology, district communication systems, and security technology.

At the High School, work began in November, with the installation of construction fencing and temporary walls, demolition of outbuildings and some pavement areas, as well as the closing of the cafeteria.

Students have been eating lunch in the South Gym since December 1, as the cafeteria and kitchen undergo major renovations. Temporary kitchen facilities have been set up according to health codes across the hall, where the kitchen was located when the building was Junior High East. Renovations of the cafeteria and kitchen are anticipated to be completed during the fall of this year.

In “the quad,” construction of the new library has begun, with demolition of pavement and the installation of foundations. In late March, the project is expected to be ready for the steel structure. The library will be adjacent



*View of ‘the quad’ at the High School, with construction of the new library and corridors to improve student traffic flow.*

## *Capital improvement project update, continued*

to the pool and will include a corridor to connect the north and south wings in order to create a more efficient student traffic flow. Completion is anticipated sometime around the fall of this year.

The current library will then be converted to a new secure entrance, main office, counseling center, and nurse's office. The goal of this portion of the project is to create a clear formal entrance to the entire school. This work is expected to begin upon completion of the library addition and is expected to be completed by the summer. Additionally, several new science rooms are currently being constructed in the south wing interior classrooms. Teachers originally in those interior rooms have been reassigned to other spaces in the school made available as a result of the relocation of several district offices to Hibbard Road.



*Temporary cafeteria in the South Gym.*

Temporary walls are now in place to help separate the construction area from the instructional space. Completion of these new science rooms is anticipated for this fall. As classroom renovations are completed, construction will then move onto the next set of planned classroom renovations.

Site work has also begun on the expanded parking lot and new multi-purpose stadium behind the High School. Contractors will do as much work there as they can during the winter months. Several storage buildings behind the High School have been demolished in order to make way for a new parking lot and field.

The new parking area is projected to be ready for the start of the next school year, while the multi-purpose stadium is anticipated to be complete in the fall of 2021.

## *Middle/Intermediate School project*

The Middle/Intermediate School building project has been approved by the state, and bids have now been awarded. Construction for this fourth portion of the overall project is expected to begin this summer.

This project includes the renovation of science, technology, and art rooms at the Middle School, kitchen/cafeteria upgrades and expansion, exterior security and building improvements, roof replacements, mechanical/electrical/emergency lighting upgrades, and exterior door replacements, as well as some parking and bus drop off/pick up improvements.

## *Transportation Department/additional elementary projects*

Initial work at our elementary schools was completed during the first portion of the overall project in 2018-19. This included parking lot replacement at Gardner Road, partial roof replacements at Big Flats and Center Street, security fencing at Ridge Road, and technology upgrades at all four schools. Additional work at our elementary schools and our Transportation Department will finish the overall project during the last portion of this capital improvement project.

This final scope of the project includes work such as roof replacement and site work at Ridge Road, partial classroom renovation at Big Flats, roof replacement and transformer upgrade at Gardner Road, site work at Center Street, overhead door upgrade and pavement renovations at the Transportation Department on Sayre Street.

This portion of the project is now in the planning phase in order to submit to the state Education Department in the near future.

Work on this final portion of our first Horseheads 2030 project is expected to begin in 2021 and be completed in 2022. This will wrap up the first of three needed capital improvement projects to update all of our buildings and enhance the educational environment for a rapidly changing future for our community and its students. The organization of these projects will allow the district to maximize state building aid in order to minimize the effect on local taxpayers. As with the October 2017 referendum, residents will vote on future projects.

# Educational update: curriculum work continues

In Horseheads, teams of teachers, administrators, and other staff are working through an extensive, backwards-design curriculum process using our state standards.

It is a multi-year process, with work on new content areas beginning while implementation in other areas is ongoing. The goal is to create a Horseheads-specific curriculum that meets and exceeds state standards in all subject areas.

“Curriculum work is critical to our goal of improving the education we offer our students,” said Dr. Thomas J. Douglas, superintendent of schools. “Creating Horseheads-specific curriculum is key to providing quality, comprehensive instruction to our students.”

The curriculum development process involves research, developing units and tasks, selecting resources, differentiating the instruction so that it meets the needs of all learners, creating a common vocabulary, implementing the new curriculum, and assessing its impact on student learning.

Throughout the work in content areas, teachers and administrators will use a variety of data to review and reflect on what is working, identify professional learning needs for staff, determine needed changes in the process, and revise the curriculum to ensure its effectiveness for all students.

Professional learning works hand-in-hand with curriculum development. Throughout the process of curriculum development, teachers lead and participate in professional learning opportunities to be sure they are prepared to effectively implement the work.

“We are proud that our teachers are collaborating and teaching each other aspects of our curriculum process,” said Anthony Gill, assistant superintendent. “Whether it be after-school trainings, release days, conference days, or summer work opportunities, Horseheads is building a culture of learning founded on the expertise of our staff.”

The district’s curriculum development timeline is aligned to district needs and the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards Implementation Timeline.

Currently, PreK-9 teachers are implementing the newly-developed English Language Arts Curriculum. Instrumental Music Curriculum is nearing completion, and General Music Curriculum is currently being developed. Implementation of new Maturation Curriculum at grades 4, 5, and 6 will begin in March.

Work on our Math Curriculum began last year and continues to be developed. The Science Curriculum process in grades 6-9 will begin this spring.



*Abyssa Hunt and her kindergartners at Gardner Road ‘tapping’ the sounds of words during their daily phonics instruction.*



*Elementary teachers and staff working on strategies for teaching phonics.*

# Senior English students pitch projects to peers

Senior students in Aurora Dufort’s English class at the High School are working on a “20% project.” The idea stems from an initiative done by 3M and Google. 3M gave its employees 15% of their work time to pursue personal projects, and one of the results was the creation of Post-It notes. Google gave its engineers

20% release time to pursue fresh ideas, and one result was Gmail.

The project is self-directed, allowing students to choose what they want to work on. They have worked in groups or individually to come up with an idea that they would like to spend time pursuing.

Since the beginning of the semester in early February, they have spent Fridays developing a project “pitch,” explaining their project and why they think it has value.

“For this project, the students need to be able to demonstrate that the project is worthy of investing a significant amount of time, is learning-based, and incorporates English language arts and research skills,” explained Dufort.



On February 24, students pitched their project ideas to students in Sierra Luongo’s English 11 class, Kyle Fuller’s American Voices class, and Kris Earl, interim principal. The students and adults moved through the room listening to each presentation, asking questions, and rating the ideas using a rubric of project requirements.

Students will continue to work on their projects on Fridays, using the feedback they received from their peers to refine their projects. In May, they will present a three to five-minute “TED-style” talk about what they worked on and what they learned from the process.

The ideas they are working on are interesting and varied, from learning sign language to developing a new statistic for baseball, from writing a fictional novel to developing a workout/diet program for people working to run a faster mile. Other students in the class pitched creating a Youtube channel, writing and illustrating a comic book that focuses on mental health, developing a fitness center, and learning how to code, embroider, and braid hair.

The objective of this senior project is to foster innovation and motivation for learning.

“My hope is that the project will help students develop necessary skills for their future,” said Mrs. Dufort. “I hope it enables them to seek out a genuine interest and create something that makes them feel proud.”



## 2020 Everyday Heroes

We are proud to introduce our 2020 Everyday Heroes, clockwise from top left: Brent Hulslander, Tommy Dale, Amelia Zisk, Annabella Nilon, and Brandon Good. The five were selected from nominations from our school staff based on character, responsibility, kindness, persistence, and other important traits.

The Everyday Heroes program is sponsored by WENY TV News and First Heritage Federal Credit Union, honoring exceptional students in our region's high schools for the past 16 years. There are 78 honorees this year, and they will all be recognized at a reception in May. Until then, photos of the students will be featured on WENY's ABC and CBS stations.



## 2020-21 budget development calendar

The district has begun development of the 2020-21 Proposed School Budget. The Board of Education will hold three budget workshops in addition to their regular monthly meetings to discuss the budget. The Budget Vote is Tuesday, May 19.

The public is welcome at all meetings:

- Thursday, March 19 Board of Education Regular Meeting, Multi-Media Center, 6pm  
*Instructional and district administration budgets*
- Thursday, April 16 Budget Workshop, Multi-Media Center, 6pm  
*Budget updates; finalize discussions*
- Wednesday, April 22 Board of Education Meeting, Multi-Media Center, 6pm  
*Board to vote on adopting the proposed budget*
- Tuesday, May 5 (*tentative*) Board of Education Candidates' Forum, Multi-Media Center, 6pm
- Thursday, May 7 Public Hearing, Multi-Media Center, 6pm
- **Tuesday, May 19** **Budget Vote/Board of Education Election, High School South Gym, 7am-9pm**

*Budget presentations and videos will be uploaded to the district website after the presentation.*

**On May 19, all district residents are eligible to vote, as long as they meet the following requirements:**

- Are a U.S. citizen
- Are 18 years of age or older on the day of the vote
- Have lived in the district for at least 30 days prior to the vote on May 19
- Are not restricted from voting in general elections based on election law

Please note: You do not have to be registered in general elections or own property in order to vote in school budget votes. If you are not registered to vote in general elections, please bring identification to the vote May 19.

# Snapshots



Employees from Corning Incorporated and the Corning Museum of Glass have visited our schools during Black History Month in February for the Corning Read-In. They have read and discussed stories about black history and shared a bit about themselves and their careers. Above, Dr. Obiefuna Okafor, senior project leader at Corning Incorporated, reads to students at Big Flats on February 20.



The High School Greenroom Players presented 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame' March 5-7.



The Horseheads Elks Lodge 2297 has donated dictionaries to all of our third-graders for many years. The students truly enjoy owning these dictionaries and using them throughout their school years. Each year, members of the Elks personally hand out dictionaries to the third-graders in one school and deliver the books to offices at our other schools.

Elks Don Fischer, Terri Augustine, Steve Crozier, and Jim Jernigan, brought dictionaries to our Center Street students on February 19.



The Grade 3 Wax Museum is a tradition at Ridge Road. Students have researched a famous or influential person. At the wax museum during the afternoon on February 19-21, they portrayed that person for their fellow students, as well as teachers, staff, and parents.



Tanglewood Nature Center brought owls to visit Gardner Road pre-kindergartners January 10 as part of their learning the letter 'O'.



# Snapshots



Stephen Rice's Grade 10 English class at the High School read Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' at the end of the semester. On January 9, groups of students presented scenes from the play.



Eighth-graders toured the GST BOCES Bush Campus January 9 to see Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in action. Small groups of students visited four CTE classrooms to see firsthand what the students learn, do, and experience. The tour highlighted BOCES' emphasis on hands on learning, the value of learning a skill, and how students can prepare to go directly into the workforce after graduation. The Career Development Council coordinated the tour.



Our grade 6-12 music students continue to participate in the Harmony Bridge program, a national project that connects student musicians with senior residences. Here, students play for residents at Brookdale Senior Living in Painted Post in November. After they perform, the students spend time in conversation with the residents. Groups have performed at residences across our region. Horseheads was one of five districts chosen to pilot the program in 2015.



Gardner Road held a Penny Drive for the Arctic League in December. On January 6, members of the Character Education Leadership Team, with assistance from Principal Patrick Patterson, counted donations from the Arctic League Penny Drive. The total donated was \$162.52.



Left: Tacy Kilmer's fourth-graders at Big Flats studied fossils in December. After Hannab Brady found a big fossil rock while fossil hunting with her grandfather, she decided to share it with her classmates. On December 13, Hannab's grandfather, Franc Laux, visited the class and led them through the process of splitting the rock open. Several students tried their hand at splitting the rock, and everyone got to see the fossils inside.

# Snapshots



In January, students in Pam Doren's Civil War class at the High School, participated in hands-on learning activities. They made hard tack and rock candy, did "wig-wag" or semaphore (communicating on a battlefield with flags), and used a working telegraph to send and receive messages.



Gardner Road first-graders used their problem-solving and critical-thinking skills in a breakout box activity in December. Using their knowledge of addition and subtraction, they worked in groups to solve clues to discover the combination to locks on the box. Once they opened all the locks, they were able to open the breakout box and see what was inside. Above, Instructional Support Teacher Matt Middlebrook looks on as students in Kristy Shutter's class work on their box.

Breakout box and other activities are being used in classes across the district to help students improve and test their skills and knowledge.



In December, High School Math Teacher Rick Gryska challenged students in his Algebra 2 classes to determine which factory made the M&Ms he brought in for them. They were told the percentage of green M&Ms that are used at the two factories that produce M&Ms in the United States. They then analyzed the proportion of green M&Ms in their samples and used their knowledge of statistics to figure out the answer: These M&Ms came from the Cleveland, Tennessee factory.



Left and below: Center Street students spent time with their buddies on the last day of school before winter break December 20.

On December 19, Middle School students learned a little about how much teachers and staff care about them. When they got to school, they found a treat on their lockers - a reindeer with a chocolate nose and a positive message written on the back.



# Unified Bowling inaugural season

Our High School's new Unified Bowling Team began its season in February. It follows the Unified Basketball program that began in 2018.

The team competed in bowling matches across the area and celebrated the season at their final match on February 26.

Unified Sports® is a program of Special Olympics that combines equal numbers of athletes with and without intellectual disabilities on sports teams for training, competition, and connection.

Helping to guide the program is the Youth Activation Committee (YAC), a leadership team that develops activities, encourages participation and attendance at Unified events, and leads in the creation of an inclusive school community.



*The Horseheads High School Unified Bowling Team.*

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## *Middle School combines giving with fun*

Giving is a tradition at the Middle School. In December, they hold a food drive, raise funds to buy presents for needy families, and collect coats to donate to a local organization. A celebration called the Food Drive Games is also a tradition for students and staff on the last day of school before winter break.

Led by the school's Student Council and National Junior Honor Society, students collected more than 3600 items for the Food Bank of the Southern Tier and more than 50 coats for the Salvation Army. They bought gifts for a family and raised \$600 for the families involved in a November fire in Hornell. They had plenty to be proud of as they celebrated on December 20.

Teachers and a student from the two teams who collected the most food items took part in fun games including a "snowball" fight, marshmallow toss, and a relay race that included a tissue race, sack race, tricycle race, and hoop race. They also enjoyed a new activity - because they raised so much for the Hornell families, six good sports took a pie to the face: English Teacher Chuck Donovan, English Teacher Jessica Kelly, Special Education Teacher Meghan Hale, Social Studies Teacher Dora Leland, Assistant Principal Tom Hoeffner, and Principal Ron Holloway.

"At the Middle School, we follow the FISH philosophy by encouraging students to do four things: Be There, Choose Your Attitude, Make Their Day, and Play," said Holloway. "Our Food Drive allows them to be there for others, and our Food Drive assembly is a great opportunity for us to play before the winter break."



# Honoring our veterans

Our schools hold tributes to veterans each year, helping our students understand the importance of honoring our veterans, not just in November, but throughout the year. Thank you, veterans!



## Please send us information

If you live in the district and have a young child, share your child's information with us so that we can contact you when your child is eligible for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten.

Please send your child's name, birthdate, parent(s)' name(s), address, and phone number to [hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com](mailto:hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com).

Questions? E-mail us or call 739-5601, x4251.

## Reminder to parents...

If you move within the district, we require two proofs of residency when you submit the address change. We accept the following:

- Bank contract or mortgage agreement with name and address showing home purchase
- Signed rent or lease agreement with landlord's name, address, and telephone number, or DSS processed landlord statement
- Most recent utility bill (electric, phone, etc)
- Receipt for gas/electric/phone service
- Driver's license or state ID card with picture showing current district address
- Currently active bank account/checkbook statement with name and address imprinted
- Payroll stub with address

*Questions? Call 739-5601, x4251.*

## Safe Schools Line

To report a concern, rumor, or other safety issue anonymously and confidentially 24 hours a day, call

**795-2044 or 1-800-305-4984**

View our full website calendar [here](#), or view the calendar on Google [here](#).



**Office of Children  
and Family Services**

To report child abuse or neglect, call toll free

**1-800-342-3720 or  
[ocfs.ny.gov/main/cps](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cps)**

## Learn more about the district...

- Visit [www.horseheadsdistrict.com](http://www.horseheadsdistrict.com)
- Like us on Facebook - district and our schools
- Follow us on Twitter: *HbdsSchools*
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*The Horseheads Central School District offers educational programs without regard to race, color, national origin, creed, religion, marital status, military status, sex, sexual orientation, age, gender identity, predisposing genetic characteristic, or disability, and provides equal access to applicable groups under the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act. Inquiries regarding this policy may be made to Caitlin DeFilippo, Title IX/DASA Coordinator and Co-Civil Rights Compliance Officer; Anthony Gill, Co-Civil Rights Compliance Officer; or Kelly Squires, Section 504 Coordinator, Horseheads Central School District, One Raider Lane, Horseheads, NY 14845, (607) 739-5601.*

# Events

March 5-7	High School Greenroom Player's production of <i>The Hunchback of Notre Dame</i> , 7pm, Auditorium (Saturday, March 7 also includes a 2pm matinee performance) - purchase tickets at the Box Office prior to each show
March 6	Intermediate School STEM Night, 6:30pm
March 10	PreKindergarten Registration (by appointment), Multi-Media Center, 9am-2pm; Middle School Progress Reports: High School Parent Advisory Council, 4pm; Ridge Road PTO Carnival Planning, 6pm: Ridge Road PTO, 6:30pm; Intermediate School PTO, 6:30pm
March 11	PreKindergarten Registration (by appointment), Multi-Media Center, 4-6pm
March 12	Center Street Math Fact Day
March 12-13	Ridge Road Grade 4 Musical, Cafeteria, 7pm
March 13	High School Report Cards; Gardner Road Talent Show, Cafeteria, 6pm; Center Street Swim Night, High School Pool, 6pm
March 14	High School Snow Ball, Middle School
March 16	Grade 6 Parent Orientation, Cafeteria, 6pm
March 19	Center Street Project Fair, Board of Education Meeting, High School Multi-Media Center, 6pm
March 20	Superintendent's Conference Day - No school for students; Gardner Road Movie Night, Heights Theater, 6:15pm
March 32	Intermediate School Presentation/Open House for Grade 4 Families, Middle School Cafeteria, 6pm; High School Wind Ensemble/Orchestra Concert, Auditorium, 7:30pm
March 24	PreKindergarten Registration (by appointment), Multi-Media Center, 9am-2pm; Middle School Band Concert, High School Auditorium, 7:30pm
March 25	PreKindergarten Registration (by appointment), Multi-Media Center, 4-6pm
March 27	Elementary/Intermediate Marking Period ends; Center Street Spring Carnival, 5-8pm; Middle School Dance/Open Gym, 7-9pm
March 30	Middle School Orchestra/High School Concert Band Concert, High School Auditorium, 7:30pm
March 31	Big Flats Spring Photos; Center Street Blood Drive, Cafeteria, 3-7pm (call 607-795-2580 for more information); High School Choir Concert, Auditorium, 7:30pm
April 2	Center Street Poem In Your Pocket Day; Elementary/Intermediate Report Cards; High School Marking Period ends
April 3-10	Spring Recess - No School (pending use of snow days)



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## Horseheads Central School District

143 Hibbard Road • Horseheads, NY 14845 • (607) 739-5601, x4295

### Board of Education

Pamela Strollo, President; Kristine Dale, Vice President  
Daniel Christmas; Warren Conklin; Mary Anne Holleran; Shehla Javed; Doug Johnson;  
Brian Lynch; Tyler Pribulick; Taylor Orban (student representative)

### Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Thomas J. Douglas

### Contact

Susan Pirozzolo, (607) 739-5601, x4295, [supirozz@horseheadsdistrict.com](mailto:supirozz@horseheadsdistrict.com)

