

PMSD CONNECT ON

Our Mission: To Prepare All Students for Tomorrow's Challenges and Opportunities

2023-24: Issue 3

Pocono Mountain SD gives the Class of 2024 a great send off

Pocono Mountain School District celebrated its Class of 2024 in two memorable ceremonies on May 31 and June 1, 2024.

Pocono Mountain East High School held its graduation ceremony at the Cardinal Stadium on the Swiftwater Campus on Friday evening, May 31, 2024.

Class Valedictorian - Alexa DelGiudice

Class Salutatorian - Hailey Cintron

Class President - Samuel Nyakundi.

Number of Graduates - 306

Attending College - 79%

Entering Workforce - 11%

Entering Military - 4%

Scholarships Earned - \$1,850,036

Grants Earned - \$973,060

Pocono Mountain West High School held its graduation ceremony at the Panther Stadium on the Sullivan Trail Campus on Saturday morning, June 1, 2024.

Class Valedictorian - Carter Edward Mui

Class Salutatorian - Ayden Kyle Rowe

Class President - Zero Carreras

Number of Graduates - 393

Attending College - 71%

Entering Workforce - 21%

Entering Military - 7%

Scholarships Earned - \$7,701,765

Grants Earned - \$707,892

The Pocono Mountain School District Administrative team and Board of Education wishes all graduates the very best with their exciting plans for the future. We are all PMSD Proud!



East Junior High School shines at Odyssey of the Mind World Finals

Pocono Mountain East Junior High School's Odyssey of the Mind teams have made a remarkable mark on the international stage, showcasing their creativity and problem-solving skills at the World Finals held at Iowa State University. Competing against teams from across the globe, including countries like Hong Kong, China, Poland, Switzerland, Japan, Mexico, and Korea, our talented students not only qualified but excelled, bringing home significant accolades.

Outstanding Performances & Recognition

The Rocking World Detour, Problem 5, Division 2 team, consisting of Hayden Christman, Will Crosby, Zachary Heckman, Sophia Hernandez, Brendan McKissick, and Christian Rodriguez, demonstrated exceptional teamwork and ingenuity. Competing against 58 teams worldwide, they achieved an impressive 6th place finish. This remarkable accomplishment highlights the team's dedication and innovative thinking.

The standout performance of the competition came



The standout performance of the Opening Night Antics, Problem 3, Division 3 team, featuring Hayden Christman, Victoria Kipe, Eli Lake, Madison Laubach, Emily Lundburg, Ben Mancini, and Melissa Venkursawmy earned the team a 3rd Place Medal at Worlds.

from the Opening Night Antics, Problem 3, Division 3 team, featuring Hayden Christman, Victoria Kipe, Eli Lake, Madison Laubach, Emily Lundburg, Ben Mancini, and Melissa Venkursawmy. This team

excelled, earning a prestigious 3rd place finish out of 68 teams from around the world. Their performance earned them a spot on the podium during the closing ceremonies, where they were awarded medals and a trophy to proudly present to their school for their outstanding efforts. This recognition is a testament to their hard work and creative prowess.

A Global Gathering of Young Innovators

Odyssey of the Mind is a renowned STEM program and creative problem-solving competition that fosters collaboration, ingenuity, and critical thinking. Each participant contributes their unique talents to tackle complex challenges, which involve constructing props, honing mechanical skills, and integrating arts, music, engineering, and mathematics.

The program's emphasis on STEM education encourages students to apply their knowledge in innovative ways, preparing them for future academic and career pursuits.

See WORLD FINALS...Page 5

From the Superintendent...

By Dr. Elizabeth Robison
Superintendent of Schools

To close out our 2023-24 school year, I wanted to share some exciting news about district recognitions and accomplishments that occurred this spring.

Great PA Schools...

I am very proud to report that the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) recognized Pocono Mountain School District and all of our schools as part of its Great PA Schools Program.

Mr. Nathan Strunk, School Board Vice-President, submitted an application on behalf of the district to the PSBA Great PA Schools Program. We were so surprised and honored when we received notification from PSBA that our district and schools met the criteria to receive this important Great PA Schools designation.

The Great PA Schools designation recognizes Pennsylvania public schools that provide students with access to rigorous programming, are community-centric, demonstrate financial well-being and display resilience. Schools are awarded a ribbon valid for a four-year term through the application and review process.

Congratulations to all of our schools. We hope our parents, students, teachers and staff are proud to be part of this important recognition.

The district, each PMSD school and the PMSD Cyber Program received a banner to prominently display that proclaims they are recognized as a Great PA Schools.

Best Communities for Music Education...

In April, Pocono Mountain School District was awarded its ninth consecutive Best Communities for Music Education designation from The NAMM Foundation for the district's outstanding commitment to music education.

To qualify for the annual Best Communities designation, Pocono Mountain SD answered detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, support for the music program and community music-making programs. Responses were verified with school officials and reviewed by The Music Research Institute at the University of Kansas.

I am extremely proud of Pocono Mountain School District's K to 12 music programs, the hard work and dedication of our entire music education team, and the support of our parents, Board of Education, Administrators, community partners, booster clubs, and most importantly, our students who continue to excel in our music programs.

Pocono Mountain SD was one of 1,000 school districts out of 13,515 across the nation to receive the Best Community for Music Education recognition, which puts the district's program in the top 7% across the country.

Research into music education continues to demonstrate educational/cognitive and social skill benefits for children who make music.

Odyssey of the Mind World Finals...

We had three teams from the district qualify at the State Finals to compete at the Odyssey of the Mind



Pocono Mountain School District receives Great PA Schools designation from the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA). Becky Dussinger, Senior Director of Member Outreach for PSBA, presented the Great PA Schools banner to the Superintendent of Schools and the Administrative Cabinet, (pictured here left to right) Dr. Mark Wade, Assistant Superintendent for Special Education; Courtney Burrus, Executive Director of Human Resources; Ms. Dussinger; Dr. Elizabeth Robison, Superintendent of Schools; and Dr. Catherine Sweeney, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. The Great PA Schools designation recognizes Pennsylvania public schools that provide students with access to rigorous programming, are community-centric, demonstrate financial well-being and display resilience.



Dr. Robison, Superintendent of Schools; Mrs. Heidi Donohue, Co-Principal, and Dr. Jessica Loverdi, stopped by to visit with students in Ms. Kristin Kemmerer's class during Summer School. Ms. Kemmerer is a Reading Specialist at CREC.

World Finals, that took place at Iowa State University over Memorial Day weekend. Two teams were from the East Junior High School and one team was from the West High School. All three teams did amazing.

The East Junior High School team that competed in Problem 3, Opening Night Antics, Divisions 2, placed 3rd out of 45 teams from across the United States and around the world. Their performance earned them a spot on the podium during the closing ceremonies, where they were awarded medals and a trophy to proudly present to their school for their outstanding efforts. This is the second year in a row that we had an East Junior High School team place 3rd at the World Finals.

The East Junior High School team that competed in Problem 5, Rocking World Detour Division 2, placed 6th out of 36 teams at the World Finals. The West High School Team placed 14th out of 17 teams in Problem 2, AI Tech-NO Art Division 3.

We are very proud of all of our school Odyssey of the Mind teams, and especially our three teams that



Dr. Robison, Superintendent of Schools, visited with students, who are attending the Summer School program at Clear Run Elementary Center (CREC), in Mrs. Ellen Wilson's class. Mrs. Wilson is a 2nd Grade Teacher and Summer Program Coordinator at the school.

excelled at regionals, states and then at the world finals.

School Safety Grants...

I am very pleased to announce that Pocono Mountain School District was awarded three Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) grants totaling \$704,640. The district will receive a \$45,000 meritorious school safety grant, a \$210,450 mental health grant, and a \$449,190 competitive school safety grant that will be used to continue providing trauma-informed services for students.

We are especially pleased to be selected to receive the competitive school safety grant. PCCD received 619 eligible applications requesting a total of \$192.6 million in funding. The requests equaled nearly six times the amount of funding that was available, which was \$32.2 million.

Pocono Mountain School District was one of only 104 school districts or charter schools to receive the competitive grant, and the only school district in Monroe County to receive this specialized grant funding.

Our grant writing team for the PCCD school safety grants consists of Dr. Sawicki, Dr. DeLay, Ms. Frable and me. We work very hard each year to bring school safety grant funding to our district to help provide for the needs of our students.

District-Wide Dress Down Day Fundraisers...

We held two district-wide dress down day fundraisers the second half of the school year. On February 23, 2024, we held a dress down day fundraiser for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeastern PA and raised \$4,005.33 to help support this child-focused nonprofit organization. On May 10, 2024, we held a district-wide dress down day to support Monroe County Relay for Life and raised \$3,354.57 for the American Cancer Society. The continued generosity of our PMSD team continues to amaze me.

During the 2023-24 school year, as a district, we raised a total of \$23,107.76 to donate to very worthy local causes through our district-wide dress down days and our United Way employee contribution campaign.

See **GREAT THINGS...** Page 3



Great Things happening at PMSD...continued from Page 1

Summer School...

PMSD is offering Summer School again this year for students registered to attend kindergarten for the 2024-25 school year and students up to grade 8. We have 919 students participating in our Summer School program, that runs from June 17, 2024 to July 25, 2024, on Mondays through Thursdays, from 8 a.m. to Noon. Students are studying English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. Students are receiving breakfast and a snack each day of Summer School. The district is also providing transportation to and from summer school for students.

Last year, the district piloted a program where we offered summer school to students who were registered for kindergarten. That pilot program was so successful that we expanded the program district wide to give students who are registered to attend kindergarten for the 2024-25 school year the opportunity to attend summer school and get familiar and comfortable with riding a school bus, going to school and being in a classroom environment.

We also have a special treat planned for our students during their last week of Summer School, when their schools will be visited by an ice cream truck. The ice cream truck visit is always a great experience for our students. While many things change from generation to generation, I am pleased to say our students experience that same excitement many of us felt as children when the ice cream truck came through our neighborhoods during the summer.

In addition to Summer School, PMSD is again hosting the Colonial IU-20 Extended School Year Program (ESY) and the PMSD Special Education In-Person Credit Recovery Summer Program at the West High School. The ESY Program and Credit Recovery Summer Program run from July 8, 2024 to August 1, 2024, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., on Mondays through Thursdays. The district is providing transportation for students to attend these programs.

I hope all of our PMSD families have a safe and memorable summer. As a reminder, our first day of school for students on Monday, August 26, 2024.

How to participate in PMSD School Board meetings

The Pocono Mountain School District (PMSD) Board of Education will hold the following meetings throughout the summer and fall:

- July 10, 2024 at 6 p.m.
- August 21, 2024 at 6 p.m.
- September 18, 2024 at 6 p.m.
- October 2, 2024 at 6 p.m.
- October 16, 2024 at 6 p.m.
- November 6, 2024 at 6 p.m.
- November 20, 2024 at 6 p.m.
- December 4, 2024 at 6 p.m.
- December 18, 2024 at 6 p.m.

All School Board meetings are held in the Administration Building on the Swiftwater Campus unless otherwise announced. District residents may also attend meetings virtually.

The link to register to attend virtual School Board meetings is posted to the district website Announcements section on the Saturday prior to meetings. District residents interested in attending

PMSD Board approves resolution for 2024 property tax relief

The Pocono Mountain School District (PMSD) Board of Education approved a 2024 Homestead & Farmstead Exclusion Resolution at the May 15, 2024 public School Board Meeting that outlined the amount approved district property owners will receive in property tax relief on their 2024 property tax bills.

The Homestead Farmstead Real Estate Tax reduction is part of Pennsylvania's broad-based property tax relief provided from gaming funds through the Taxpayer Relief Act, also known as Special Session Act 1 of 2006.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) notified district officials that PDE will provide the district with \$9,388,630.37 in gaming tax funds to use for property tax reduction for 12,925 approved homesteads and six approved farmsteads for a total of 12,931 approved homestead/farmsteads in the district for 2024. This is an increase of \$1,564,352.79 in the property tax reduction allocation for PMSD qualifying homesteads/farmsteads from 2023, when there were also 229 more qualifying homeowners.

"PMSD acts as a pass through for gaming tax relief funds," said Joseph Colozza, Chief Financial Officer. "The funds allocated to the district are then reallocated to qualified property owners to reduce their school property taxes."

The property tax relief for approved property owners in the district for 2024 will be \$729.62 per homestead or farmstead within the district's boundaries, an increase from last year's \$598.13 of property tax relief from gaming tax funds.

Checks will not be issued directly to approved property owners. Homeowners with an approved Homestead/Farmstead Exclusion will see the exclusion amount deducted from their property taxes on their 2024 property tax bills.

Gaming funds dedicated to property tax relief also pay for a Philadelphia Wage Tax reduction, Philadelphia Senior Citizen Property Tax reduction, allocation to school districts for the Philadelphia Wage Credit, expanded Senior Citizen Property Tax & Rent Rebate Program, and the state allocation to the remaining school districts. The amount of gaming funds dedicated to property tax relief varies each year,



Pocono Mountain School District Board of Education: (Row 1, left to right) Mr. Ronnie Byrd, Region 3; Ms. Marion Pyzik, President, Region 2; Mr. Nathan Strunk, Vice President, Region 1; Mr. Michael Stern, Region 3; (Row 2, left to right) Mr. Stephen Watto, Region 1; Ms. Christina Grape-Garvey, Region 1; Ms. Patty Rinehimer, Region 2; Ms. Anna Lopez, Region 3; and Mr. Bert Rinehimer, Region 2.

School Board meetings should check the PMSD website the day of scheduled meetings to verify that the meeting date and time has not changed.

TAXPAYER:

NOTICE OF PROPERTY TAX RELIEF
Your enclosed tax bill may include a tax reduction for your homestead and/or farmstead property. If you are an eligible homestead and/or farmstead property owner, you have received tax relief through a homestead and/or farmstead exclusion which has been provided under the Pennsylvania Taxpayer Relief Act, a law passed by the Pennsylvania General Assembly designed to reduce your property taxes.

LAND	19,010	BLDG	143,010	TOTAL	162,020	CLASS	0	PARCEL NUMBER
ASSESSMENT	BASE ASSESSMENT	LESS EXCLUSION	NET BASE ASSESSMENT	TAX LIABILITY	BASE AMOUNT	LESS EXCLUSION	NET BASE AMOUNT	
HOMESTEAD	162,020	27,898	134,122	HOMESTEAD	3,473.71	598.13	2,875.58	
FARMSTEAD	0	0	0	FARMSTEAD	0.00	0.00	0.00	
TOTAL	162,020		134,122	TOTAL	3,473.71		2,875.58	
Type Tax	Mills	2% Discount	Net Base Amt.	10% Penalty				
SCH	21.44	2,818.07	2,875.58	3,163.13				
AMOUNT IF PAID BY	09/30/23	11/30/23	12/31/23					
PAY THIS AMOUNT	2,818.07	2,873.58	3,163.13					

RETURN BOTH STUBS WITH A SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE FOR A RETURN RECEIPT.
IF PROPERTY WAS SOLD, OR TAXES PAID BY A MORTGAGE CO., FORWARD BILL TO APPROPRIATE PARTY.
CASHIER'S CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ONLY AFTER DEC 15.
PAYABLE IN UNITED STATES CURRENCY ONLY. RECEIPT NOT VALID UNTIL CHECK CLEARS BANK.
PAYMENT OF FIRST INSTALLMENT COMMITTS TAXPAYER TO THE INSTALLMENT FORM OF REMITTANCE.
UNPAID ACCOUNTS RETURNED FOR COLLECTION AFTER DEC 31 TO COUNTY TAX CLAIM BUREAU AT 570-517-3172.

Sample 2023 Tax Bill showing where the Homestead/Farmstead Exclusion is located on property tax bills. The Homestead/Farmstead Exclusion for the 2024 property tax bill will be \$729.62.

which means the amount of property tax relief for approved property owners will also vary each year.

Who will receive the tax relief: Generally, most owner-occupied homes and farms are eligible for property tax reduction. Only a primary residence is eligible for property tax relief. For property owners to receive this tax relief they would have had to file a Homestead/Farmstead Exclusion application with the Monroe County Assessment Office by March 1, 2024, and received a notice back that their application was approved. Any property owner who received property tax relief last year will still qualify. They do not have to reapply each year.

What happens to property owners who didn't apply for the Homestead/Farmstead Exclusion:

For those property owners who have not filed their Homestead/Farmstead Exclusion application, district officials encourage them to do so in order to be eligible for tax relief the next time funding is available. If they apply today and their application is approved, they will not qualify for this year's tax relief, but will qualify for any future tax relief when available.

The applications and information on how to apply are located on the District web site at www.pmsd.org under the Departments, select Business Office and the PA Homestead/Farmstead Exclusion page.

Governor appoints Superintendent to state council for military children

The Superintendent of Schools for Pocono Mountain School District, was recently appointed by Governor Josh Shapiro to the state council for military children.

Dr. Elizabeth Robison was appointed by the Governor to the Pennsylvania State Council for Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission to represent military impacted school districts. The Council provides guidance and assistance on educational opportunities for military children across Pennsylvania and works collaboratively with other states on issues or concerns that impact military children beyond state boundaries.

"It's an honor to represent military impacted school districts across Pennsylvania, and more importantly the children of military families, on this important state council," said Dr. Robison. "Bringing a voice to the council for the children of military families and the school districts they attend can make a real difference in ensuring equity of educational and extracurricular opportunities afforded to our students from military families,



Dr. Elizabeth Robison, the Superintendent of Schools, congratulates Swiftwater Elementary Center 3rd Grader Elliette Wilcox on her participation in Instructional Report presentation at a public School Board meeting. Dr. Robison was recently appointed by Governor Josh Shapiro to the Pennsylvania State Council for Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission.

success of their transition into new schools, and removal of any barriers that could hamper their ability to

achieve education success."

The Compact's State Council was formed to address "the challenges military children face, including frequent relocation. It allows for uniform treatment as military children transfer between school districts in member states," according to the PA Department of Education Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3) website.

"I am excited to begin my work on this commission for the benefit of military families and their supporting school districts," said Dr. Robison."

Dr. Robison will serve on MIC3 along with the State Compact Commissioner, Barbara Clemmer; Chief State School Officer Dr. Khalid Mumin, the Secretary of Education; Military and DOD Representative Drew Turinski, Deputy Garrison Commander, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.; the Governor's Executive Branch Appointee, Brigadier General Terrence Koudelka; the Appointee by the Speaker of House, Representative, Joe Webster; the Appointee of the Minority Leader of the House, which

is currently vacant; the Appointee of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, Senator Tracy Pennycuik; the Appointee of the Minority Leader of the Senate, which is currently vacant; the Appointee from School Boards Association, Stuart Knade; and Ex-Officio Members Jacqueline Schultz, School Liaison, Carlisle Barracks, and Lisa Bodle-Lyford, School Liaison, NSA Mechanicsburg-Philadelphia.

In addition to her appointment to this important State Council focused on issues impacting military children, Dr. Robison serves on the Governor's Board of the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators, the Lehigh Valley Health Network-Pocono Board of Associates; the PA Association of School Administrators Women's Caucus Representative, and the Board of Pocono Services for Family and Children.

Dr. Robison is also the recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Award from Shippensburg University (2021) and the recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Award from Pottsville Area High School (2019).

Strunk participates in PSBA 2024 International Education Study Group

From April 14-20, 2024, an 18-person delegation of Americans visited Bonn, Düsseldorf, Dortmund, and Cologne Germany as part of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association's (PSBA) International Education Study Group to provide school board members and school administrators from the state with an overview of the German education system, including how it works, how the system achieves results, how it is funded, and much more.

Mr. Nathan Strunk, the Pocono Mountain School District Board of Education Vice President, was selected to be part of this prestigious delegation that visited Germany as part of the International Education Study Group project which is held in collaboration with the American Council on Germany.

The intent of the project is to gather ideas for the adaptation and implementation of German practices and to develop recommendations centered on changes Pennsylvania school districts could implement to significantly enhance district academics, operations, facilities, and culture. Members of the delegation represented rural and suburban school districts from across the state of Pennsylvania.

"Bringing back insights from Germany's education system has the potential to make a real and lasting impact across the Commonwealth and right here at Pocono Mountain," said Mr. Strunk. "Introducing a system akin to Germany's Dual Education System in Pennsylvania could significantly enhance our Career and Technical Education programs, bridging the skills gap between theory and practice for our students, while also creating thousands of jobs and bolstering our economy. Additionally, adopting innovative practices in teacher training and emphasizing early childhood



Pocono Mountain School District (PMSD) Board of Education Vice President Nathan Strunk, participated in an 18-person delegation of the PSBA 2024 International Education Study Group who visited Germany to learn more about Germany's education system.

education and holistic teaching approaches can create a more comprehensive educational experience. These recommendations are aimed at strengthening our schools, benefiting our communities, and preparing Pennsylvania students for success in a competitive global economy."

Beginning in Bonn, the delegation first met with representatives from the Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung / German Ministry of Education and Research for an overview of the federal education ministry and a discussion about its role and responsibilities, current trends in the German education system, challenges and areas in which innovation is taking place, how quality and performance is measured in schools, and what kind of

funding the ministry provides to promote educational initiatives.

The group learned about the StartChances program, a new federal €20 billion initiative over 10 years that the federal and state governments have agreed to in order to decouple educational success from social background and ensure more equal opportunities. Around 4,000 schools in Germany will become start-up schools through this initiative, which will focus on strengthening basic skills through three program pillars: investments in contemporary and conducive learning environments, opportunity budgets for needs-based solutions in school and teaching development; and personnel to strengthen multi-professional teams. In the afternoon, the delegation learned about exchange opportunities for teachers, teaching assistants, and students between Germany and the United States.

On the second day of the program, the delegation visited Grundschule Finkenhof / Elementary School Finkenhof and BONNEUM Beuel to learn about the educational network of learning workshops in Bonn that promotes scientific and digital learning in innovative didactic formats for students in kindergarten, primary, and secondary school.

In a wide-ranging discussion at the Ministerium für Schule und Bildung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen / Ministry of Education for the State of North-Rhine Westphalia in Düsseldorf the delegation learned about the responsibilities of the state education ministry in terms of school oversight. Additional topics included education funding, the Digital Strategy for Schools

See STUDY GROUP... Page 5

Study Group hopes to benchmark off of Germany

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in North Rhine-Westphalia – Teaching and Learning in the Digital World and the state's AI Systems and Media Competence Framework, curricula for primary schools, and efforts to develop alternative forms of performance reviews for schools. The groundwork was laid for further cooperation and exchanges between North-Rhine Westphalia and Pennsylvania.

The delegation had an intensive two days of meetings and visits in Dortmund, beginning with a discussion at the Dortmund Schulverwaltung / Dortmund School Administration to gain a deeper understanding of how municipal school administrations are structured and what responsibilities they have in the German education system. While most responsibility for education policy is at the state level, municipalities are responsible for infrastructure and ensuring resources exist to implement policies. Current challenges, similar to those in the U.S., include the integration of migrants, digitalization efforts, a shortage of teachers, and adequate funding to build new schools and modernize school buildings for the classrooms of the 21st century. At the Stadtgymnasium / Dortmund Grammar High School members of the delegation had the opportunity to interact with students and teachers to learn about the school's digitalization efforts and focus on integrating the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into their curriculum. Everyone was extremely impressed by the energy and commitment of the teachers and to the amazing English skills of the students aged 10 to 17, who presented information on various activities taking place at the school.

During the second day in Dortmund, the group visited the Droste-Hülshoff-Realschule (Intermediate Secondary School) learning about the school's commitment to inclusion of students with special needs and following the motto "every human being is a miracle!" Led by student guides, delegation members attended classes for English, mathematics, science, and social studies. Students at the school also showed the delegation their Holocaust project which they created on their own initiative to educate youth about the crimes of the Nazi regime and the need for us all to never forget.

The delegation wrapped up its busy week in Germany with a visit to a Mittelstand (SME) company to learn about apprenticeship training and to



PMSSD School Board Vice President Nathan Strunk's participation on the PSBA 2024 International Education Study Group project allowed him to gather insight into Germany's approach to education and formulate recommendations aimed at strengthening Pennsylvania schools.

the Universität zu Köln to learn about teacher education. At FOGTEC Fire Protection company representatives discussed why so many German companies participate and invest in the German dual system of apprenticeship training, providing young Germans ages 16-20 with practical training in more than 325 recognized occupations. FOGTEC offers apprenticeships in eight fields and sees their program as critical to finding skilled workers to operate their future business. Colleagues from the Industrie- und Handelskammer zu Köln / Chamber of Industry and Commerce joined the meeting to explain the important role of the chambers in monitoring and coordinating the apprenticeship system. The group also had the opportunity to tour the production facilities to see FOGTEC's innovative sprinkler systems being built. At the Zentrum für Lehrer*innenbildung (ZfL) / Center for Teacher Training at the University of Cologne, the group engaged in a great discussion with eight administrators and faculty about the structure of the teacher education system in Germany as well as the challenges posed to reforming the education system to ensure fairness in opportunity to all students and the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers.

For many school board members on this trip, it was a life-changing experience with many opportunities to learn about and study the structure, curriculum, and governance of German schools.

(Article was printed with permission from the author, Robert Fenstermacher, Chief Content Officer of the American Council on Germany. This article was edited to include information on PMSSD's participation in the 2024 International Education Study Group visit to Germany and to meet PMSSD Connection space limitation.)



OUTSTANDING TEACHER: Mrs. Corinne Long was honored as an Outstanding Science Teacher during the awards banquet of East Stroudsburg University's Pennsylvania Chapter of Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Society on April 26, 2024. Mrs. Long is a Science Teacher at Pocono Mountain West High School. She was nominated by Amy Catalano for her contribution to the Science Department at Pocono Mountain School District. Mrs. Long serves as the district's Secondary Science Department Head and the Advisors for the West High School's Science Olympiad and Science National Honor Society. She also serves as a member of the IU20 PennSEL network team and has worked with PDE for the incorporation of the new science standards.

East Junior High excels at World Finals

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Coaching & Community Support

The success of the East Junior High School teams would not have been possible without the guidance and support of their dedicated coaches, Jen Fiore and Jamie Schweppenheiser. Their commitment to nurturing the students' talents and fostering a collaborative spirit played a crucial role in the teams' achievements. Additionally, special thanks go to East High School coach Kevin Semian and volunteer coach Jane Fiore, whose contributions were invaluable.

An Unforgettable Experience

Participating in the Odyssey of the Mind World Finals provided these bright and creative students with an extraordinary opportunity to meet and collaborate with like-minded peers from around the world. The experience not only enhanced their problem-solving abilities but also broadened their cultural horizons, making it a truly enriching journey.



The Rocking World Detour, Problem 5, Division 2 team, consisting of Hayden Christman, Will Crosby, Zachary Heckman, Sophia Hernandez, Brendan McKissick, and Christian Rodriguez earned a 6th Place finish at the Odyssey of the Minds World Finals.

East Junior High School is immensely proud of its Odyssey of the Mind teams. Their accomplishments at the World Finals are a testament to their hard work, creativity, and passion for learning. We look forward to seeing their continued success and innovation in future competitions.

First Day of School
for 2024-25 School Year

Monday
August 26, 2024



East High School sports finish the year strong

By Mrs. Tamala Toleno,
Principal
PM East High School

Swimming District XI Champion & State Qualifier

Congratulations to East High School swimmer, Victoria Kuteran. Victoria won Gold in the 200-yard freestyle and Silver in the 100-yard freestyle. Her 200 time of 1:57.92 broke her own PME school record. Victoria moved on to compete in the PIAA State Championships in the 200 Free at Bucknell University.

State Wrestling Medalist

East High School senior, Keegan Demarest competed in the PIAA Wrestling Championships in Hershey, PA. Keegan advanced to the medal round, where he pinned his opponent to finish 7th in the State at 152 lbs.

Unified Track Team Wins Conference Title

The East High School Unified Track team recently captured the Greater Lehigh Valley Pocono Region Conference Championship.

The team earned a spot in the Regional Championships at Daniel Boone High School. Congratulations



The Pocono Mountain East Boys Varsity Volleyball team brought home Silver from the District XI 2A championships.

goes out to Coach Marianne Paige and these super athletes and coaches.

East Boys Volleyball Team

Congratulations to the East Boys Volleyball Team for winning District XI 2A Silver.

Esports Winter

Congratulations to East High School junior, William Sobolewski, for winning the finals of The High School Esports League (HSEL): Winter Season for Super Smash Brother Ultimate (SSBU).

This was a national level tournament and William competed in the Silver Bracket against Carmel Catholic High School (Mundelein, IL).

Esports Team Hosts

Melee on the Mountain

Congratulations to East High School sophomore, Vincent Tumminia for taking 1st Place at the Melee on the Mountain: Super Smash Brothers Ultimate (SSBU) Esports Tournament.

Vincent competed against 38 competitors from 6 local schools in a double elimination bracket. This is Vincent's 4th time taking 1st Place at a High School Esports SSBU Competition.

East Athletes Commit to Play at Collegiate Level

Ten East High School student athletes celebrated their commitment to continue playing at the collegiate

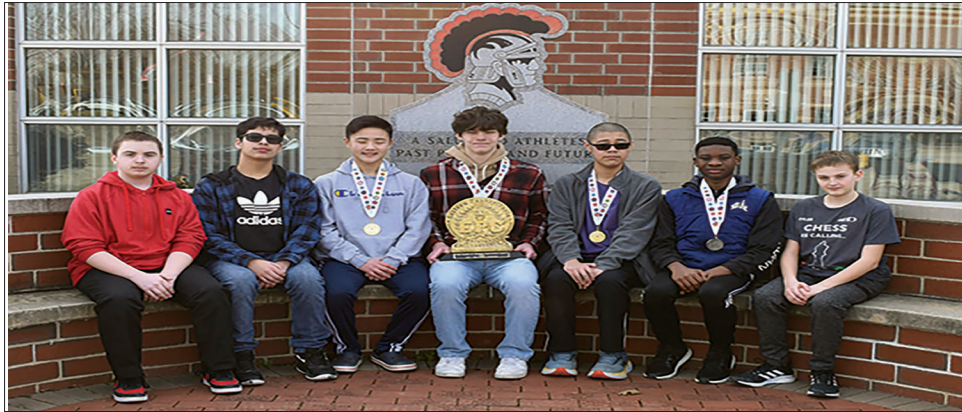


Ten Cardinal senior athletes signed on to play sports at the collegiate level.



East swimmer Victoria Kuteran won Gold in the District XI Championships and qualified for States.

level during the East High School College Commitment Night on April 23, 2024. Alexa DelGiudice, Campbell Demarest, Mia Lopez, James Boyd, Adam Horvath, Keegan Demarest, Rasu Wearing-Poindexter, Nate Meinweiser Evan Seymour, Dakota Stiff.



Left to right: Pocono Mountain East Champion Chess Team of Nate Michelus, Josue Villalta, Sam Oh (Top 10 Finisher/Gold Medalist), Matt Doughty (Top 20 Finisher/Silver Medalist), Shu Leong (Top 10 Finisher/Gold Medalist), Joseph Mckingley (Top 10 Finisher/Silver Medalist), and Marcel Hecht.

EHS Chess Team 1st in the nation

By Mrs. Tamala Toleno, Principal
PM East High School

The East High School Chess Team had an exciting year. They won the Mountain Valley / Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Championship for the 23rd time.

The team then performed well at the PA Chess State competition taking second divisionally. The National Chess Championship was held in Baltimore Maryland.

The EHS Chess Team placed 1st in

the nation, Divisionally Under 800 Section. Special recognition goes out to Shu Leong who placed 1st in his division beating out over 400 participants. The Pocono Mountain East Chess Team defeated Parkland 5-2 for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Championship.

The East High School Chess Team competed in the EPC Invitational on Thursday, February 8, 2024. Congratulations to the East High School Chess Team, Champions of the EPC Invitational.

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West High School preparing students for their future

By Mr. Michael Jones, Principal
PM West High School

There are many student accomplishments to be proud of at West High School. Among these include the West Coffee Corner winning an Excellence in Education award this year.

The number of students completing AP courses being at the highest rate yet, several seniors being recognized as AP Capstone Diploma recipients, the launch of our Athletic Honor Society that will join our other academic honor societies, regional and district championships in several academic and athletic areas, EPC Scholar Athletes, National Merit Scholars, increasing Advanced Placement participation and success rates, and nationally recognized student leaders. Each of these is an important indicator of success and a positive educational environment.

Another indicator of West High School values is our connection to the community and the many opportunities that are created for our students because of that community support. Three great examples of community relationships that generate learning opportunities for students are Pocono Mountains United Way's Generation Next, St. Luke's CareerLink Academy at West High School, and the SADD Safety Carnival.

Generation Next finished its second year at West High School and had a healthy increase in membership. This program is designed to work with students in their college and career readiness process, helping them transition from high school to college.

Made available from a partnership with the Pocono Mountains United Way, Generation Next meets with groups of students on a scheduled basis and provides unique opportunities for students that include guest speakers, a focus on stress management, financial literacy, time management, and navigating the job market, while also offering team building experiences, and trips to several colleges and universities.

This learning experience provides students access to speakers, trips, and learning experiences that they would not traditionally have access to without this partnership. There were 19 members of the senior class that participated in Generation Next, with 18 going to different colleges including Villanova, NYU, and Penn State.

St. Luke's Careerlinking Academy is a program available to West High School Juniors that is created through a partnership with St. Luke's and focuses on combining observational learning experiences with professional development that exposes students to careers in healthcare. Through a variety of learning sessions and shadowing opportunities, students are able to learn about clinical and non-clinical health care-related jobs. In this learning experience, students that are accepted into the program are able to learn from guest speakers that discuss different job opportunities, work habits, job-seeking and job-keeping skills, and business etiquette.

Students are also provided an opportunity to shadow staff in different fields as they complete their hospital rotations. Students this year were able to work with nurses, radiologists, and technicians in the



The St. Luke's Careerlinking Academy is a great program available to Pocono Mountain West High School Juniors, created through a partnership with St. Luke's University Health Network. Students accepted into the program are able to learn about clinical and non-clinical health care-related jobs.



Nineteen PM West HS seniors participated in the Generation Next program, which helps prepare students for college and the transition from high school to college.

field. Using information gained from their training sessions and field experience, students were required to complete a formal presentation at the end of the experience that summarized their gained knowledge to their teachers, hospital, and district administration.

The third unique learning experience for students at West, comes from an amalgamation of partnerships that are fostered by our SADD student organization. In addition to organizing a mock crash prior to Prom each year, SADD also organizes a major community collaboration that focuses on first responders and other essential roles in the community.

This event created a carnival-like fair with different stations spread out around the bus parking lot of the high school. Each community agency was provided a station where they set up different activities or learning sessions for students. Included in this event were several fire companies, including Tobyhanna Township, Coolbaugh Township, Tunkhannock Volunteer Fire Company, Pocono Mountain Volunteer Fire Company, law enforcement including Pocono Mountain Regional and PA State Police, Pocono Mountain Regional EMS, J and J Towing, State Farm Insurance, St. Luke's Simulation Station, The Monroe County Control Center and the Monroe County Coroner.

Each of these providers had an interactive learning experience for students that varied from allowing students to wear firefighting gear, practice with firefighting equipment, use a fire hose, learn safe driving techniques and witness a helicopter landing.



School Resource Officer Jason Wile oversees the Impairment Goggles booth at the PM West HS Safety Carnival. The Impairment Goggles are a tool used to educate students on the impact and dangers of being impaired by drugs and/or alcohol.



The PM West HS Safety Carnival demonstrates the strong partnerships between the high school and local emergency responders. Students learned more about the role of emergency responders through hands-on activities, such as prying open a door using firefighting equipment and tools.

All of these experiences are great learning opportunities for students and exist because of the dedication of staff and the support of our community. The West High School looks forward to continuing these relationships and creating a diverse network of experiences for its students.

SIS drama club makes a splash with 'Wizard of Oz'

By Ms. Kristine Kunsman,
Principal
& Mr. Daniel Higgins, Assistant
Principal

Swiftwater Intermediate School

This spring, the Swiftwater Intermediate School (SIS) Drama Club performed *The Wizard of Oz - Youth Edition*. Heading into the 2023-2024 school year, there was a great energy and enthusiasm for the musical as many students had participated in or saw the previous year's performance of *The Music Man Kids*. Given that *The Wizard of Oz* is one of the most well-known musicals, many SIS students wanted to participate.

Students in grades 4 through 6 auditioned at the end of October. For those able to participate, it was a wonderful experience for students to perform famous classics such as "If I Only Had a Brain," "We're Off to See the Wizard," and even "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." Drama Club students met weekly beginning in the fall to prepare for their final performances for family and friends at the end of March.

Many people are familiar with the plot



The Swiftwater Intermediate School Drama Club performed The Wizard of Oz - Youth Edition on March 22-23, 2024. Cast members (left to right): Ava Melton, Neylan Cox, Amaya Pollastro, Iliana Jimenez, and Trey Beyer earned standing ovations for their outstanding performances.

from the famous original *The Wizard of Oz*, first released in 1939 as technicolor film starring Judy Garland. The Youth Edition version was a little shorter than the namesake film; however, the plot followed the original storyline of Dorothy and friends very closely while also adding a great song and dance number: "The Jitterbug."

Prior to this show, many of the SIS students had never participated in any on-stage performance. Participating in Drama Club was a wonderful opportunity for students to learn the basics of acting, memorizing lines and choreography, as well as the many

other different aspects of performance preparation.

The performance experience plus the invaluable life lessons of self-responsibility deserve a standing ovation. Stage performances like *The Wizard of Oz* do not happen by chance. From the tickets to the costumes and the sets, this show truly took a village to prepare and put on. Drama Club advisors Ms. Gomez and Mr. Michels spent months teaching the scenes and songs to the students, organizing rehearsals, overseeing costuming, and all of the other various details.

The SIS Set Design club under

the direction of Andrea Flaherty spent weeks creating and painting the set pieces to create the magical Munchkinland, Grayscale Kansas, and even the fantastic land of Oz

Lastly, the assistance from maintenance and custodial workers, building and district administrators, NTAs, and especially all of the parents and guardians, who helped get their children to each rehearsal, were all critical in helping make this unforgettable performance opportunity come to life.

Going into the 2024-2025 school year, students are already excited for the opportunity to participate in another musical at the intermediate level. Auditions and information for the next musical will be available to students and families at Swiftwater Intermediate School in the beginning of the next school year.

Performances such as these take a lot of time and effort, but these opportunities are exactly how students transform and grow into better musicians, actors, and people. Bravo to the cast and crew, and we cannot wait to see and hear them on stage again soon!

2024-2025

Secondary Schools

Open House Dates

East Junior High School
Monday, August 19, 2024
3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

West Junior High School
Tuesday, August 20, 2024
3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

PMSD Cyber
Wednesday
August 21, 2024
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
(K-12)



West High School
Tuesday, August 19, 2024
6:30 p.m.
Grade 9 and New Student
Orientation
Friday, August 23, 2024
11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Grades 9-12

East High School
Tuesday, August 13, 2024
6:30 p.m.
Grade 9 and New Student
Orientation
Friday, August 16, 2024
11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Grades 9-12








Pocono Mountain West Junior High School students showcased their amazing talents during their production of the musical, Newsies Jr.

WJHS 'Newsies' plays to packed auditorium

By Dr. Annmarie Vaughn,
Principal
PM West Junior High School

On June 4, 2024, the West Junior High School Drama Club Production of *Newsies Jr.* took place with a smashing success.

The production was directed by Ms. Jeralyn Aragona-Young with Art and Design overseen by Ms. Gretchin Benson.

Newsies Jr. is based on the 2012 Broadway production of *Newsies*.

The story of *Newsies* is: *When powerful newspaper publishers raise prices at the newsboys' expense, the charismatic Jack Kelly rallies newsies from across the city to strike against the unfair conditions. Together, the newsies learn that they are stronger united and create a movement to fight for what's right.*

The cast and crew performed to a packed house, with absolute perfection. Thank you to all of our families and friends who came out to support our show!

SEC provides a great mix of fun & learning for all students

By Dr. Krislin Ofalt, Principal
& Ms. Karen Doughton, Principal
Swiftwater Elementary Center

SEC Students Greeted by Unicorns

On the last day of the 2023-2024 school year, all SEC students were greeted in the morning by three colorful unicorns.

Thank you to Mr. Amato, Mrs. Garofano, and Mrs. Kizer for being such great sports and putting a smile on the faces of the entire SEC community.

Yearbook

This year, Mr. Amato and the SEC yearbook club, put together a fantastic yearbook for the entire SEC community to enjoy.

Riley Sebring (3rd grade – Mrs. Yeomans’ class) designed the front cover and Zabela Mujovic (3rd grade – Mrs. Yeomans’ class) designed the back cover of the yearbook.

SEC Field Day – SIS Helpers

Several SIS students assisted with the four, fun-filled SEC field days. The SIS students worked closely with the SEC students and helped provide a safe and fun experience for all involved. SEC loves our SIS helpers!

Police Appreciation

SEC hosted its annual police appreciation event. Local police officers attended lunch with the SEC students. The police officers sat with the students and had conversations with them. The Police Appreciation Committee treated the officers to a luncheon.

Student art work was displayed to show appreciation



(Above) Swiftwater Elementary Center (SEC) held a luau for it's 3rd graders to celebrate their moving up to the Swiftwater Intermediate School (SIS) for 4th grade. (Below) SIS students help out at the SEC Field Day.

for the officers. We would like to give a huge thank you to SEC’s Officer Joe! He is simply the best!

SEC Luau – Third-Grade Dance

The SEC third-grade students had a big celebration before heading off to Swiftwater Intermediate School.

It took a village to make this special event happen. Thank you to the SEC PTO, DJ Dr. Wade, and the SEC faculty and staff.

Students enjoyed dancing, the Rockin’ Photo Booth, and a whole lot of fun! SEC wishes all third-grade students well as they transition to SIS! We will miss you!



CRIS students have fun at the Imagine Math Incentive

By Ms. Amy Haynes, Principal
Clear Run Intermediate School

Clear Run Intermediate school hosted an Imagine Math incentive under the direction of Mrs. Deriggi, Math Support teacher, to help boost student confidence and understanding with their Math skills and the Imagine Math online program.

Students who completed 30 or more Math lessons and showed a minimum of 10% growth on their benchmark tests from the beginning of the year to the end of the year were invited to participate in an End of Year Celebration complete with certificates, pizza, and prizes.

Students were also recognized on CRIS TV throughout the year as they attained various benchmarks.

In total, 183 students (20% of our students) were recognized for completing 30 or more lessons and achieving this goal.

Bogdan Naskovic, an Imagine Math representative attended this event with our students and announced that CRIS had the most Imagine Math lessons completed in the entire state of



Clear Run Intermediate School students earned an end-of-year celebration for excelling at Imagine Math lessons.

Pennsylvania.

Congratulations to all our CRIS students on their Imagine Math lesson completion. Keep up the great work!





2024-2025

Elementary

Open House Dates



Clear Run Elementary Center

Wednesday, August 21, 2024

4:00 p.m. – 6:00

Grades 1 and 2

Thursday, August 22, 2024

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Kindergarten Only

Swiftwater Elementary Center

Wednesday, August 21, 2024

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Kindergarten Only

Thursday, August 22, 2024

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Grades 1-3

PMSD Cyber

Wednesday

August 21, 2024

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

(K-12)

Tobyhanna Elementary Center

Thursday, August 22, 2024

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Grades K-2

5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Grades 3-6

Clear Run Intermediate School

Wednesday, August 21, 2024

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Swiftwater Intermediate School

Wednesday, August 21, 2024

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.



PMSD Cyber Program hosts events that build Community

By Ms. Nora Wandowloski, Director
PMSD Cyber Program

Pocono Mountain School District offers diverse educational opportunities for all students in grades Kindergarten through 12th grade. The PMSD Cyber Program is the virtual, cyber, option open to students who live within the Pocono Mountain School District. Students who choose the PMSD Cyber Program experience the independence and flexibility of full-time cyber learning, or can benefit from hybrid learning options which blend virtual and in-person traditional learning.

Cyber offers options beyond the traditional classroom for all PMSD students. Flexible schedules through full time at-home cyber instruction, a hybrid combination of in-person and at-home instruction, additional enhancement courses to bridge any academic gaps, and credit recovery to support students earning back lost credits are available.

PMSD Cyber Program students can take all elementary core courses, and secondary academic, advanced and AP courses in Math, Science, English, Social Studies and electives. PMSD Cyber Program students have the option to work at their own pace to complete courses and often they accelerate through requirements.

Many high school students opt to participate in Cyber for the flexibility to work part-time jobs during traditional school day hours and complete course assignments in the evening. Additionally, having the option to participate with their peers in school sports, activities and events, is why families select the PMSD Cyber Program over all others.

Any student who is enrolled in the Pocono Mountain School District and is interested in competing in college sports will be able to select and participate in PMSD Cyber Program core courses from the list of requirements in the NCAA Eligibility Center. In



PMSD Cyber students attended a field trip at Books-A-Million in Dickson city for the annual, Read Across America celebration. Students received swag bags courtesy of Books-A-Million.

order to meet amateurism standards and demonstrate academic preparedness, an athlete must complete all core courses and meet all Pocono Mountain School District graduation requirements and PMSD Cyber Program is here to provide options for those students.

Students on all grade levels who do not want to participate in a full-time Cyber Program but still need a flexible schedule can participate in a hybrid schedule with the PMSD Cyber Program and the traditional brick-and-mortar building. Selecting the correct subjects for online study and for participation in the traditional building will be a team decision with the student, parents, a PMSD Cyber teacher, and building level staff meeting together to develop the best program for each individual student.

Most elementary students participate in core courses at the traditional brick-and-mortar building; while many secondary students choose to participate in the many Art, Music and Technology programming that Pocono Mountain has to offer.

PMSD Cyber Program is here to offer the best

option for all PMSD students.

Students participate in daily live lessons with PMSD Cyber Program teachers. Working with teachers that are located on West Campus allows PMSD Cyber Program to offer the personal connection that sets it apart from other cyber schools. All teachers have live instruction scheduled throughout the day to guide students through the Edgenuity Course Map.

All students can schedule an appointment to come in and meet with a member of the Cyber Staff to receive face-to-face support. Meetings with teachers are offered daily through Zoom and can be scheduled by appointment for one-on-one instructional support.

If you are a district resident looking for the best Cyber Program for your student, or want to learn more about the full-day and hybrid programs for students in Kindergarten through 12th grade offered by PMSD Cyber Program, please contact Nora Wandowski at nwandowski@pmsd.org, 570-839-7121 extension 75400 to schedule an appointment. PMSD Cyber Program is Always Open For Learning!

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CREC students learn about gardening

By Dr. Jessica Loverdi, Principal
& Mrs. Heidi Donohue, Principal
Clear Run Elementary Center

Clear Run Elementary Center teachers, Ms. Lauri and Ms. Reagan introduced their first-grade students to gardening this year.

From the delicate flowers to the emergence of tiny green tomatoes and finally the bright red ripe fruit, students chronicled each stage through written observations and illustrations in their science journals.

They didn't just observe the growth process; they interacted with it hands-on - sequencing the plant

life cycle stages using worksheets and journal entries and then, when the first ripe tomatoes were finally ready for picking, allowing them to taste the fruits of their observation and describe the flavors in their journals. "My

tomato tastes sweet and juicy," commented one student. "I can't wait to try growing more at home," shared another.

As colleagues watched the lettuce and tomato plants grow in these classrooms, they inquired about the possibility of being able to do the same.

Therefore, seven more teachers will have hydroponic gardens in their classroom next year too.



The role of traditions at Tobyhanna Elementary Center

**By Dr. John Kevra, Principal
& Ms. Jessica Grebb, Assistant Principal
Tobyhanna Elementary Center**

According to the Merriam Webster dictionary, a tradition is an established, inherited, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior. When many of us think about traditions in our own lives, we often reflect upon the various holidays we celebrate throughout the year. For example, when we reminisce about Thanksgiving, Fourth of July, or Hanukkah, our memories most likely include turkey, fireworks, or a menorah respectively. These food items, entertainment, and symbols are traditions that we fondly remember and anticipate in the future as part of our families' celebrations. Traditions have a wonderful way of bonding us to the important events that make up our lives and the people we share these events with.

Recently, Tobyhanna Elementary Center welcomed past TEC students who were part of the 2024 Pocono Mountain School District graduating class. It was their opportunity to walk the halls of their elementary school one last time as a PMSD student. Inviting graduating seniors to TEC is a relatively new tradition we refer to as a Graduation Walk. The seniors arrived at TEC wearing their caps and gowns much to the delight of our K – 6 students lining the halls. As the traditional graduation song, Pomp and Circumstance, triumphantly resounded over the public address system, the seniors paraded twice through the school and eventually collected in our cafeteria. It was a chance for the teachers to see the incredible young women and men they played a part in launching into adulthood. It was also an opportunity for students to show their appreciation for the solid foundation they were given at TEC. The event was filled with laughter, hugs, and more than a few heartfelt tears of joy and happiness from teachers and graduates alike!

Throughout the morning's joy and excitement, there was a common thread among all the positive comments and conversations. Every senior remembered the numerous traditions that they enjoyed as an elementary student several years ago.



What better way to show school spirit than through Tie-Dye Day, when the entire student body assembled in their tie-dyed shirts for a school photo.

For example, as students passed the art room, they mentioned our annual tie dye day. I'm guessing most of them still have at least one of the coveted t-shirts they were given ten or eleven years ago! Some still remembered their science fair projects that were proudly displayed on the library shelves. Others commented on transforming the 6th grade classrooms into an Egyptian Museum complete with pyramids, mummies, and costumes.

Comments about field day, trips to the bog, participating in student government or Odyssey of the Mind, as well as, efforts to make generous donations to United Way, hatching eggs in third grade, or being inspired to study education after being part of the Future Teachers of America Club reminded all of us how important our traditions are.

A quality education, just like traditions, provides students with fond memories and something they can relate to. Over many years, numerous traditions have been woven into the fabric of the TEC experience. They are anticipated by our incoming students and remembered by our graduates. Our teachers find great fulfillment as they perpetuate our numerous traditions and it's very obvious our parents appreciate those



Students at Tobyhanna Elementary Center enjoyed the activities during their annual Field Day event.

efforts. Finally, I can say to the recent sixth graders who were part of our Moving Up Ceremony, when you look back at your years at TEC, you will also have fond memories of our traditions, and I know they will bring a smile to your face.

Students become published authors with Digital Animal Book

**By Dr. Jessica Loverdi, Principal
& Mrs. Heidi Donohue, Principal
Clear Run Elementary Center**

A group of second graders at Clear Run Elementary Center had the opportunity to become published authors this year, thanks to a special project led by teachers Ms. Cassidy and Ms. Cummings.

The project, titled "A World of Animals," allowed students to choose an animal of their interest to research and write about.

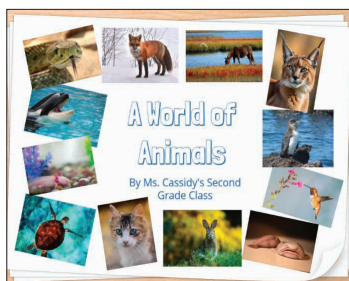
From sea turtles and axolotls to

cheetahs, students explored a diverse range of species, gathered information and crafted passages about their chosen animal.

Using the multimedia program Book Creator, students then brought their writing to life by creating individual

pages for a digital class book. They carefully selected pictures to accompany their text, and even recorded themselves reading their passages aloud, adding an engaging audio component to their work.

The project not only allowed students to explore their interests and develop



Clear Run Elementary Center students publish a book during the 2023-24 school year.

their writing skills but also introduced them to the exciting world of digital publishing.

The digital format of the book made it

accessible to a wider audience, allowing friends and family members from all over the world to appreciate students' hard work.

MCTI experiential learning opportunities allow WHS students to win big

By Ms. Michele Connors,
Assistant Principal
PM West High School

Throughout the 2023-2024 school year, about 170 West High School (WHS) students had not one but two high schools they called home – they were both Panthers and Cougars, they wore both navy and silver and gold and black, and they studied both academic subjects and also one of 22 different career program areas at the Monroe Career and Technical Institute (MCTI).

MCTI is an extension of Monroe County's four school districts and provides tuition-free career and technical education for secondary students throughout the county. Each school day, students attend a half-day at MCTI and a half-day at their high school.

"MCTI offers its students opportunities to learn specific career skills and training, which prepares them for entrance into the workforce or post-secondary education" (<https://www.monroecti.org/Page/1>). At MCTI, WHS students learn a variety of trades including automotive collision repair, business and hospitality management, culinary arts, and plumbing to name a few. Next year, there will be even more opportunities, as MCTI adds a new program to its current list of course offerings – therapeutic science/sports medicine.

Each program has its own coursework and hands-on learning experiences, and many programs offer additional learning opportunities such as field experiences, competitions, and organizations for our students to participate in. SkillsUSA is one opportunity for students to participate in while at MCTI and is a national nonprofit organization for students who are preparing for careers in trade, technical, and skilled service occupations.

In January, 87 MCTI students had an opportunity to compete in the SkillsUSA District 11 Competition, and 15 of those students won a spot to compete at the state SkillsUSA Competition in April. WHS senior and MCTI criminal justice student, Jaheem Glasgow was one of the state competitors, and he won first



MCTI's "Seize the Spotlight" Team including Pocono Mountain West High School Juniors Amir Nicolas and Emily Daniels. (photo courtesy of Ecolab and ProStart)



PM West HS Senior, Jaheem Glasgow at the SkillsUSA State Competition. (photo courtesy of MCTI)

place in the state in Criminal Justice and represented Pennsylvania from June 24th-29th at the SkillsUSA National Competition in Atlanta, Georgia. A chance at a National SkillsUSA title is only one of the accolades Jaheem recently earned. On May 22nd, at the WHS Senior Awards Night, Jaheem was presented with a \$150,528.00 National ROTC scholarship from The United States Army Cadet Command, he also won multiple scholarships and awards, and he was the student speaker at MCTI's Senior Awards Night which was held on May 30th.

Students in MCTI's horticulture program have the opportunity to participate in learning experiences, community service, and skills competitions through the Future For Agriculture (FFA) Organization. "The National FFA Organization is dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education" (<https://www.monroecti.org/domain/62>).

In April, five MCTI horticulture students competed in the Regional FFA Competition and won first place as a team. The team included WHS juniors Zada Johnson and Aimee Rosario, and Aimee also won first place in her individual competition as well. They also competed in the State Competition from June 11th-13th at Pennsylvania State University.

"ProStart® is a two-year, industry-backed culinary arts and restaurant management program for high school



PM West HS Juniors Zada Johnson and Aimee Rosario participated in the Future for Agriculture (FFA) regional skills competition through MCTI. (photo courtesy of Monroe FFA)

students" (<https://chooserestaurants.org/programs/prostart/>) which sponsors several competitions throughout the year. In May, WHS juniors and MCTI culinary arts students Amir Nicolas and Emily Daniels, along with their MCTI ProStart team members, won a trip to the 2024 National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago, Illinois as winners of the Ecolab and ProStart Seize the Spotlight Contest.

The team of students created a video entry which demonstrated why they felt they deserved the spotlight at Ecolab's Sunday Night Spotlight event and highlighted their knowledge, passion, and creativity for the culinary arts in the video. They were judged on their expertise in culinary and/or hospitality management, communication and presentation skills, understanding of the industry, and creativity and

personality. The team of students won the competition and the trip to Chicago for the 2024 National Restaurant Association Show and had the opportunity to participate on stage in the programming at the Sunday Night Spotlight event on May 19th in which they competed in a culinary competition against Chef Justin Sutherland, a celebrity chef, Emmy-winning host, and Iron Chef champion. Photos and a video highlighting their trip can be found at: <https://www.sunday-spotlight.com/> or by scanning the QR code located near this article.

Amir said that he's been to different culinary competitions in the past, but this one was on a whole different level. He expressed his gratitude to Ecolab for paying for this all-inclusive experience.

While Chef Sutherland won the



QR Code to the "Seize the Spotlight" Chicago Trip Video

CRIS brings drama & music to the stage

By Ms. Amy Haynes, Principal
Clear Run Intermediate School

Finding Nemo Performance

This spring, the Clear Run Intermediate School Drama club performed *Finding Nemo Jr.*

Each year Mrs. Mann, Mr. Agostini, & Ms. Meckes generate positive energy and enthusiasm for our school musical as students enjoy watching and having the chance to participate in yearly productions.

Students were very familiar with the movie *Finding Nemo*, thus generating such a generous turnout to be cast in this year's production. Disney's *Finding Nemo Jr.* is a celebration of true friendship, bravery and love! Dory and Marlin remind us to 'Just Keep Swimming.'

Drama club students met weekly beginning in the fall to prepare for their formal performances for family and friends at the end of March. In-school assemblies were also held for students at Clear Run Elementary Center as well as Clear Run Intermediate School. Bravo to the cast and crew for a spectacular performance and our parents and guardians who helped get their child to rehearsals.

Going into the 2024-2025 school



Clear Run Intermediate School's Drama Club students took to the stage in Spring to perform *Finding Nemo* before packed audiences.

year, students are already excited for the opportunity to participate in another musical at the intermediate level. Auditions and information for the next musical will be available to students and families at CRIS in the beginning of the next school year.

Band Camp

On Friday, April 19th the CRIS Music Department hosted a recruitment assembly for our Fourth Grade students.

Our Fifth and Sixth Grade students performed to help kick off, excite and prepare our Fourth Grade students for

participating in band.

Slowly our band and chorus numbers have continued to grow at CRIS, with our band now featuring almost 200 students! Kudos to our music department - Ms. Meckes, Ms. Colom, Mr. Walter, & Ms. Harris.

Pocono Mountain School District will be hosting a free band camp from June 26th-28th and July 9th-11th from 2 p.m. - 6 p.m..

We cannot wait to hear and see our students shine for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year.



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SIS offers students great opportunities to excel

By Ms. Kristine Kunsman, Principal
Mr. Daniel Higgins, Assistant Principal
Swiftwater Intermediate School

STEM Design Challenge

Several 6th grade students from SIS participated in the STEM Design Challenge at Northampton Community College on April 3rd. This event challenges the students to come up with creative and innovative ideas to solve some of the world's leading issues and to build a model of their ideas using up to 1,400 K'Nex pieces.

This year they were asked to come up with high-tech farming ideas because as our population grows, food demand increases. In addition, PA agriculture contributes billions to our state economy annually and supports over 500,000 jobs for Pennsylvanians.

The high-tech farming idea also needed to include an explanation of how it is environmentally friendly and green, making it safe for both people and the environment. In the 6th to 8th grade division there were 13 teams that competed.

One of our teams from SIS took 3rd place for their innovative idea, "The Crop Picker" which not only picks ripe crops but also rakes and removes old, dead crops and uses those to power their piece of equipment. The students on the third-place team were Natalie Kunkle, Avery Martin, Stella Baugess and Gabriella Gonzalez.



Swiftwater Intermediate School (SIS) students compete in STEM Design Challenge at Northampton Community College on April 3, 2024. The SIS team placed 3rd (left to right) Natalie Kunkle, Stella Baugess, Avery Martin, and Gabriella Gonzalez.

Visit from WNEP

At Swiftwater Intermediate School on March 22, Mr. Thomas' 5th grade Science class got a very special visit from WNEP's meteorologist Jeremy Lewan. Jeremy spoke with students about the Solar Eclipse on April 8th and even gave the students special eclipse glasses so they could view it safely.

Jeremy also got to hear Mr. Thomas' students give their own reports and predictions about our current weather in the Poconos.

Meet the Instrument Night

SIS hosted a "Meet the Instrument" night on Tuesday, April 16, 2024. Meet the Instrument Night is

a yearly event that gives the 4th grader students at the Swiftwater Intermediate School the opportunity to try out several instruments for 5th grade Band.

The event is hosted by Zeswitz music company. The night featured a performance by the East High School Jazz Band directed by Tim Eick. Meet the Instrument Night is also assisted by the TRI-M Music Honors Society students.

These volunteers assist the 4th graders in making their first sound on an instrument memorable and fun.

SIS Students participate in Songfest & Band Festival

The past few years have seen a growing number of students participating in the musical ensembles at Swiftwater Intermediate School. The 4th, 5th and 6th grade choruses are a popular ensemble for students to participate in, as well as the 5th grade and 6th grade level bands.

Swiftwater Intermediate Music Teachers Ms. Kresge, Mr. Michels, Mr. Niskala, and Mr. Orfanella have been looking to further challenge their students musically and provide them with varied performance opportunities. In addition to these grade level ensembles, the extracurricular chorus "The Chirping Cardinals" run by Mr. Michels and Mr. Orfanella, is open to all 5th and 6th grade chorus members who want to participate in and perform at more school

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Tips for preventing learning loss over the summer

By Dr. Catherine Sweeney
Assistant Superintendent for
Curriculum & Instruction
Pocono Mountain School District

Most students probably agree that the best part of summer break is not having to go to class, do homework, or take tests. While these brain breaks can be great, the length of the summer break can lead to a lot of learning loss before the new school year.

In fact, research suggests that students can lose up to 3 months of reading skills and a month of math skills over the summer.

While it might seem intimidating to maintain learning over the summer, experts agree that it does not take a whole school day of effort to prevent learning loss during the summer. Instead, parents need to only set aside 15-30 minutes a day to maintain and build reading skills.

Below are 3 tips to encourage summer reading:

1. Let the child pick the book. While children might not gravitate towards the most “academic” books on their own, the priority is building excited readers. Plus, especially for younger learners, any reading is good practice! Allowing them to read a graphic novel or choose an audio book can be a great starting point to build excitement around daily reading time and get them excited about a trip to the library or bookstore.
2. Model reading time for them. Anyone who’s spent time around children knows they are sponges in their environment. You can absolutely take advantage of that when it comes to building



reading skills! By picking up a book and having your own reading time, you are modeling the habit of reading for fun. Kids love to copy a trusted caregiver, so you might be surprised how easy it is to get them to jump into reading time with you!

3. Make reading a game. For some learners, they are motivated by a competition or goal. Summer reading can easily become a game either in the household or in the community! One idea would be to set a goal for the number of books the family will read and plan some kind of small

celebration at the end of the summer if the goal is met (or a good effort is made)! Below is a list of summer reading challenges:

Our local public libraries offer summer reading programs

- Eastern Monroe Public Library
- Pocono Mountain Public Library
- Clymer Public Library
- Barrett Paradise Friendly Library

All Together Now Summer Reading Challenge 2024

<https://www.metrolibrary.org/summerreading>

East HS students excel at STEM

By Ms. Tamala Toleno, Principal
PM East High School

Milton Hershey School of Medicine

Students at East High School observed a live gastrectomy surgery at Milton Hershey School of Medicine via Zoom.

Students were able to ask questions during the two-hour surgery. This amazing opportunity was sponsored by the Educational Opportunity Centers of PA.

Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science State Qualifiers

East High School PJAS students participated in the 63rd PJAS Region 2 Regional Meeting at Wilkes University. Students who earned a first place went on to compete at the state competition on the main campus of Penn State University.

Science Olympiad Team

Pocono Mountain East Science Olympiad teams competed in the Northeast Regional competition held at Penn State Wilkes Barre.

DaVinci Science Center Assembly

The DaVinci Science Center assembly allowed East High School students the opportunity for hands-on learning, using their synthetic cadaver Cyndi, creating their own virus stations, and multiple interactive activities. This experience is just one of the many



The Educational Opportunity Centers of PA program offers Pocono Mountain East High School students, who are interested in pursuing careers in medical fields, opportunities to observe real operations and medical procedures.

programs offered to students through the district’s partnership with DaVinci Science Center.

Engineering Fun

East High School students had fun building VEX (robotics build system) cars powered by solar panels, hydrogen fuel cells, or battery packs.

Students compared power output by measuring voltage and amperage from different power sources. Students also tested their ping pong ball launcher designs as they learned about projectile motion.

Swiftwater student musicians perform at PMEA District 10

...Continued from Page 13

and community events. This past school year, SIS students were given yet another opportunity to partake in performance festivals hosted by Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA).

PMEA is a state-wide organization that regularly hosts music festivals for band, chorus, and orchestra. A large number of students from many different school districts are invited to a music festival, where they rehearse more challenging music with a guest clinician before performing a concert in the same evening. Many of the students who participate in these festivals come from different schools and areas and have never met each other prior to the event.

Under the supervision of Mr. Michels and Mr. Orfanella, SIS students participated in the PMEA District 10 Elementary Songfest at Pleasant Valley High School in March as well as the PMEA District 10 Elementary Band Festival at Mahanoy Elementary in May.



West Junior High partners with others to support Make-A-Wish

By Dr. Annmarie Vaughn,
Principal
PM West Junior High School

Harlem Wizard Game

Pocono Mountain West Junior High School (WJHS) and Swiftwater Intermediate School Student Government Associations came together, with the help of Mr. Tom Brogan and many staff members, to raise a total of \$9,491 dollars which will go directly to the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Greater Pennsylvania and West Virginia. A basketball game was held between the Harlem Wizards and Pocono Mountain School District (PMSD) staff to raise this money. The show was incredibly entertaining, thank you to all of our family and friends who came out to cheer on the PMSD staff, and watch us get destroyed by the Harlem Wizards, who always come to have fun!

This money will help fund the wish of a local boy who is battling cancer, and sending him and his family to Hawaii to make their trip come true. Staff members from WJHS, SIS, SEC, CREC, TEC and EJHS played in the game to a nearly sold out audience. Many staff members and local businesses also donated baskets and items which were raffled off to raise



Pocono Mountain West Junior High School Student Government partners with other schools to raise more than \$9,400 through a Harlem Wizards fundraiser to grant the wish of a Monroe County boy through Make-A-Wish.

additional funds. A huge thank you goes out to everyone who was a part of making this night a success!

PRIDE Homeroom Challenge

WJHS Students and Staff took part in our first ever Homeroom Challenge Competition throughout this school year. Throughout the school year, students earned points for Empathy Challenges, completing their SEL Check-ins, Attendance, Dress Code, Library incentives and more! At the end of each Marking Period, homerooms



PM West Junior HS Pride Homeroom Challenge winners earn a trip to Tobyhanna State Park.

who were in the lead were rewarded with popcorn, movies in the MPR, but the homerooms fought the hardest to be the overall winner.

Our 7th Grade winners were Ms. Rinker's homeroom and our 8th grade winners were Ms. Miller's homeroom. These homerooms were rewarded with a field trip to Tobyhanna State Park. There, students had the chance to kayak, boat, fish, play outdoor games, and even relax on a hammock. Students enjoyed their lunch outside and even had some special treats.

WJHS is looking forward to continuing our homeroom challenges for the 2024-2025 school year and we can't wait to see who our winners will be and what adventure they will be rewarded with!

East Science Olympiad teams bring home medals

By Ms. Tamala Toleno, Principal
PM East High School

Science Olympiad

The East High School and Jr. High Science Olympiad Teams traveled to Penn State to compete at the Science Olympiad at Penn State (SOAPS) Invitational.

This invitational brought in nearly 40 high schools and 20 junior high school teams from all over the eastern US, traveling from as far as Florida to compete. Medals were awarded to the top 6 finishers in high school and top 4 in junior high school.

The following students earned medals:

- 5th Place - High School Astronomy Juniors Connor Straub and Emily DiPietro
 - 6th Place - High School Write It Do It Senior Katelyn Sorrentino and Junior Lila Shelton
 - 4th Place - Jr. High Write It Do It - Freshman Valerie Cooper and 7th grader Riley O'Connor
- East High School/MCTI Students**



Pocono Mountain East High School and Junior High Science Olympiad Teams earned three medals at the Penn State Science Olympiad Invitational.

WIN at Skills USA Competition

The Lehigh Valley's next generation of hands-on workers competed at the SkillsUSA District 11 Championships. Nearly 500 technical students competed and connected with Lehigh Valley employers at SkillsUSA. Congratulations to the following students for placing 1st at SkillsUSA:

- Toby Palmieri, Architectural Drafting

- Preston Bowes, Building Construction
- David Vergara, Information Tech Servicing
- Alana Burnette, Nurse Assisting
- Adam Rettenmyer, Power Equipment Technology
- Cole Fetterhoff, TeamWorks Carpentry
- Ethan Espenshade, TeamWorks Electrical.

MCTI...Continued from Page 12

entrée portion of their friendly competition, the MCTI team won the dessert portion, and Amir was happy about that.

Amir stated the following about his trip: "It's definitely one of my top three experiences in my entire life so far because during this time I also had different things that I could have done, but I decided to go with the Chicago trip instead because it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

We did a lot of team building before the competition. We got to go to different places we wanted to see in Chicago, and I got to spend a lot of time with my team, and I think we did become closer as a team."

Emily also said that the trip to Chicago was a fun and exciting experience. She stated that attending the 2024 National Restaurant Association Show provided her team the opportunity to network with multiple chefs and meet with people they wouldn't get to meet with on a regular basis such as the CEO of Ecolab.

Emily said that Chef Sutherland was really nice and gave them tips and tricks to increase their speed in the kitchen which were helpful during the competition.

She said they were treated like celebrities and even had a videographer follow them around and record all of their experiences. She's hoping to get the chance to attend again next year.

In addition to the learning experiences mentioned above, our West High School MCTI students also participate in apprenticeship experiences and dual enrollment partnerships, hold memberships in the National Technical Honor Society, and complete numerous hours of community service as part of their educational program.

All 9th-12th grade students district wide are eligible to attend MCTI. Each year, an application is posted on the MCTI website in November, and applicants are notified in the spring as to the status of their acceptance.

For more information about MCTI, please reach out to your child's guidance counselor or visit their website: <https://www.monroecti.org/Page/1>.

Pocono Mountain bids a fond farewell to 32 retirees

Pocono Mountain School District (PMSD) recognized and thanked its 2023-24 school year retirees at the Board of Education meetings in June.

Thirty-two PMSD employees retired during the 2023-24 school year. The employees completed a combined 723 years of service to the district and its students.

PMSD would like to thank the following retirees for their many years of dedication and service to district students and the school community.

- Mark Bartkowski, Health and Physical Education Teacher, 35 years of service
- Stuart Beck, Custodian, 17 years of service
- Loureen Benke Administrative Assistant, 16 years of service
- Lisa Boes, Paraprofessional, 21 years of service
- Cathy Celli, Certified School Nurse, 14 years of service
- James Dougher, Social Studies, 1 year of service
- Julie Dunham, Reading Specialist, 35 years of service
- Lori Dymond, Family Consumer Science Teacher, 32 years of service
- Dr. Kathleen Fanelli, Principal, 30 years of service
- Shelly Grillo, Art Teacher, 21 years of service



The Pocono Mountain School District Board of Education and Administration thanked retirees for their many years of service to the district at the School Board meeting on June 5, 2024. (Left to Right) Dr. Elizabeth Robison, Superintendent of Schools, presented sofa blankets with PMSD logo embroidery and certificates of appreciation to retirees Dr. Kathleen Fanelli, PM East Junior High School Principal; Rosemary Schmidt, Administrative Assistant at PM East Junior HS; Dena Zimmerman, Special Education Teacher in Life Skills at Swiftwater Elementary Center; Maryann Harrington, English Language Arts Teacher at PM West High School; James Ragonese, English Language Arts Teacher at PM West HS; and Carol Montemuro, Mathematics Teacher at PM East HS.

- Kristin Grubb, Elementary Teacher, 6 years of service
- Maryann Harrington, English Language Arts Teacher, 25 years of service
- Paula Herman, Special Education Teacher, 8 years of service
- Beth Karchner, Special Education Teacher, 26 years of service

- James McDonald, Maintenance, 20 years of service
- Carmen Mendoza, Custodian, 18 years of service
- Carol Montemuro, Mathematics Teacher, 37 years of service
- Madonna Moran, Special Education Teacher, 18 years of service
- Lynn O'Neil, Administrative Assistant, 9 years of service
- Mark Oney, Grounds, 20 years of service
- James Ragonese, English Language Arts Teacher, 35 years of service
- Chequetta Roberts, Elementary Teacher, 22 years of service
- Frank Rocconava, English Language Arts Teacher, 20 years of service
- Linda Roche, Reading Specialist, 36 years of service
- Lakeram Sahadeo, Courier, 14 years of service
- Shannon Wagner, Elementary Teacher, 36 years of service
- Dave Yoder, Elementary Teacher, 33 years of service
- Dena Zimmerman, Special Education Teacher, 16 years of service
- Dr. Deborah Kerby, Business Teacher, 22 years of service
- Ann Lehman, English Language Arts Teacher, 35 years of service
- George MacDavitt, Special Education Teacher, 25 years of service
- Fran Matone, Administrative Assistant, 20 years of service

The district offers its best wishes to all retirees as they begin this new chapter in their lives.

SUN Bucks program helps low income families

The U.S. Congress approved a new program called the Summer EBT or SUN Bucks to provide food dollars over the summer months to low-income families with school-aged children.

SUN Bucks is administered by the Department of Agriculture, and the PA Department of Human Services (DHS) coordinates the benefit issuance in Pennsylvania.

Qualifying households will receive \$120 SUN Bucks benefits per eligible children, equivalent to \$40 per month over the summer, between mid-August and September 30, 2024. The SUN Bucks benefit will be issued on the family's state EBT card or on a new SUN Bucks EBT card.

Automatic Eligibility: Pocono Mountain School District students are automatically eligible for SUN Bucks if they already qualify for one of the following programs:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Medical Assistance with income

that qualifies

- Household meal applications with income that qualifies

Students who are homeless, runaway, migrant, foster, or in Head Start also automatically qualify for SUN Bucks.

Families who do not meet the automatic eligibility categories listed above, but who feel they would qualify for the SUN Bucks program for their children, will be able to submit a completed paper application for their children through the PA DHS website at <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/SUNBucks.aspx>. The paper applications will be available on the DHS website in July 2024.

A Summer EBT/SUN Bucks Benefit information packet that provides more details on this important new benefit is available on the District website (www.pmsd.org).

For more information on the SUN Bucks program for low income families with school-aged children, please contact the PA Department of Human Services at 1-800-692-7462.



Orientation

Clear Run Elementary Center

- Monday, August 5, 2024 – 9 a.m., 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.
- Tuesday, August 6, 2024 - 9 a.m., 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.
- Wednesday, August 7, 2024 - 9 a.m., 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.
- Thursday, August 8, 2024 - 9 a.m., 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.

Swiftwater Elementary Center

- Monday, August 5, 2024 – 9 a.m., 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.
- Tuesday, August 6, 2024 - 9 a.m., 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.
- Wednesday, August 7, 2024 - 9 a.m., 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.
- Thursday, August 8, 2024 - 9 a.m., 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.

Tobyhanna Elementary Center

- Monday, August 5, 2024 – 9 a.m., 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.
- Tuesday, August 6, 2024 - 9 a.m., 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.
- Wednesday, August 7, 2024 - 9 a.m., 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.