



Pearl River School District

From the Superintendent

We are well into the holiday season, and the spirit of this time of year can be found in abundance at our schools and in the voices of our students as they put forth their best performances at each of the school concerts and celebrations. I look forward to attending the concerts, as I know you do. As always, while recognizing the fun in the holidays our students, supported by the guidance of our staff, have also recognized and not forgotten the struggles of others through various fundraising efforts and collections of winter clothing aimed at alleviating the challenges presented by tragic events

and personal hardship.

Our students have been hard at work in these first months of school, and it is always a pleasure to visit classrooms and observe their enthusiasm for learning, their willingness to keep at it and work through challenging problems. Most recently, while visiting a classroom at an elementary school, I was so impressed with the inquisitive nature of the young scholars and their ability to take their learning in new and interesting directions. Students were working to improve their reading and writing using a short reading on space exploration. The stu-

dents' questions and observations that emerged made it difficult to leave!

This newsletter highlights some academic and athletic achievements from the fall including the success of our girls soccer team winning the NYS Championship! It also details two important initiatives that have begun this year: the profile of a PRHS graduate, and a 1:1 Chromebook initiative. Both of these initiatives will guide and shape our work as we prepare our students for their future.

2017 Holiday Card

This year's holiday card was designed by **PRHS Junior, Rose Schwantner.**

Rose was recognized at the December BOE meeting for her beautiful work. On behalf of Pearl River School District, we would like to wish everyone a very happy holiday season!



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***Pearl River Schools
will be closed
December 25th
through January 1st***

Superintendent's Conference Day

Our Superintendent's Conference Day last month was an important time for professional development. Some highlights of the day included:

- **Elementary**- Teachers K-2 worked with consultants to explore hands-on learning activities embedded in the new STEM Scopes science resource. Teachers in grades 3 and 4 continued on-going professional development with a Rockland BOCES literacy consultant regarding writing instruction.
- **Middle School** – Faculty were involved in technology integration activities facilitated by the district technology coaches, including applications in



Google Suite, web-site development, media presentations and interactive science.

- **High School** – Teachers worked in their departments to align instructional planning to new Regents course/exam expectations. Special education teachers focused on transition planning. Guidance

counselors visited colleges to review admission procedures.

- **Teaching Assistants** participated in NYSUT Education Trust workshops on Next Generation Learning Standards, Skills for Organizing Learning, and Disability Awareness.

Additionally, several groups of faculty met with their colleagues across the county in regional workshops – world language, speech, psychologists, social worker, physical education, music, art, library media, and health services.

National Honor Society

Pearl River High School held their National Honor Society induction ceremony on Wednesday, November 15, 2017. A total of 52 students were proudly inducted into the nation's premier organization established to recognize outstanding high school students.

Members must achieve and maintain a cumulative unweighted average of 90% or above, demonstrate exemplary standards of character and leadership, and perform outstanding service to their school and community. We congratulate these students on achieving this significant milestone in their academic career. We look forward to recognizing students in the spring as they are inducted into individual academic subject honor societies.

52 PRHS students were inducted into the Pearl River High School National Honor Society in November.



Profile of a Pearl River Graduate



PRHS teachers and administrators discussing the characteristics of a Pearl River High School graduate.

For the last several years, the district has placed an emphasis on the 4Cs: critical thinking, creative problem solving, communication and collaboration, in all areas. These are important 21st century skills that our students need not only in higher education and their careers, but everyday life. As we continue this focus on the 4Cs, we are now looking to create a Profile of a Graduate to identify a shared vision among all of our stakeholders of those academic skills, attributes and character traits that we want all of our students to develop throughout their time in the Pearl River School District. Schools began their work in discussing the Profile of a Pearl River Graduate on Superintendent's Conference Day. This afforded us the opportunity to involve our faculty and staff at all schools to begin a discussion on this new initiative.

Athletic Achievements

Our athletic teams have had a great fall season this year. The Lady Pirates soccer team was crowned NYS Class A Champions, earning the first NYS title in program history. Our boys cross-country team ended their season as Class B Section 1 Champions and placed 5th in NYS. Our girls cross-country team placed 2nd at the Section 1 Championships and placed 6th at the Federation Meet with junior Mary Borkoski qualifying for States. Our girls swim team placed 3rd at the Rockland County Championships with the 200 medley relay team advancing to the Section 1 Finals and junior, Madison McDonough, advancing to the States in two events. Our football team closed out their season by bringing

home the "Little Brown Jug" with a win over Nanuet. Our boys soccer, girls volleyball, girls tennis and girls field hockey teams all played well this season and advanced to Section 1 playoffs. Girls Soccer Coach, Tim Peabody, was named NYS Coach of the Year, and both boys and girls cross country coaches, Dan Doherty and Mike Kiernan, were named Rockland County coaches of the year! Nine of our ten varsity teams earned NYS Scholar Athlete Team honors by NYSPHSAA.

Lady Pirates Crowned NYS Girls Soccer Champions



Three Pearl River athletes also signed their National Letter of Intent to play at Division 1 colleges. Congratulations to Michael Daly, Men's Swimming, Penn State; Sean Flaherty, Baseball, Hofstra; and Matt Politis, Cross Country and Track & Field, Duke.

Technology Update

An exciting development this year is in the field of technology. We are phasing in a 1:1 Chromebook initiative that will begin with this year's 6th and 9th grade students. Over the next few months, each 6th grader and 9th grader will receive a Chromebook much like a student receives a textbook. Students will use their device both in school and at home for several years. The individual use of these devices provides an opportunity to connect students and teachers to online learning resources both in and outside of the classroom. The use of these devices will support student work in critical thinking, engagement in problem-based learning and creative problem solving, communication and collaboration. Learning opportunities will be extended beyond the classroom in a seamless manner.



The district has developed a comprehensive handbook that outlines the rules and responsibilities for the students regarding the care and use of these devices and students and parents will be required to sign forms attesting that they have read and understand the rules and responsibilities. The district looks forward to continuing to support teaching, learning, and student performance success. By increasing the integration of technology throughout the curriculum, we will enable students, faculty and staff to be effective, independent, and collaborative contributors. We expect to phase this initiative in over the next several years with incoming 6th and 9th grade students. At the K-5 level, we are already near our goal of one device (tablet, Chromebook or desktop) per student for classroom use.



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