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The Pearl River School
District (PRSD)

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online.

PRSD Pulse

March 2022

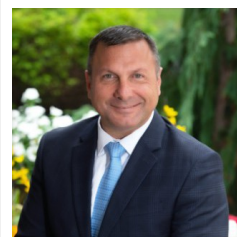


Pearl River School District
MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER

Superintendent's Update

Hello Pearl River School District Families and Staff,

I hope that each of you enjoyed a wonderful Presidents' Recess as the month of February drew to a close. On March 2, our District shifted to a mask-optional school environment following changes in the NYS Governor's mandate. Being able to see the smiles of our K-12 students, our faculty and our staff in each of our school buildings is truly exciting. The ability to have a choice has been a very welcome change – one that we meet with hope for the future and respect for the individual choices that others make – which may be different than our own. Thank you to our whole district community for supporting this change with respect and understanding.



This issue of our monthly e-newsletter highlights the very important work of cultivating a positive, inclusive and united school culture through our curriculum and promoting open conversation. During the month of February, our students celebrated the Chinese New Year/Lunar New Year, World Cultures Day, Random Acts of Kindness Day, Black History Month and Rare Disease Day – each of these creating room for us to continue to grow and learn together as a community.

As we delve into a new month, I look forward to sharing the ongoing work and improvements our District is making as we continue to progress in the right direction.

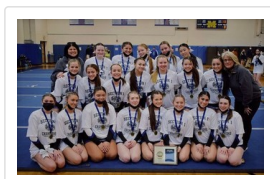
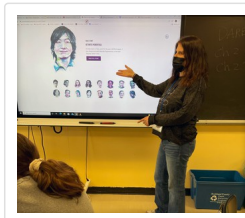
Sincerely,

Marco F. Pochintesta, Ed.D.

Front of the Class: School Spotlights

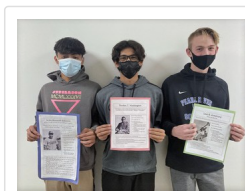


February 28 marked **#RareDiseaseDay** and Pearl River Middle School faculty, staff and students school-wide supported the cause through wearing that they care, sharing that they care, and **caring about rare!** In addition, seventh grade science teachers delivered lessons focused on rare diseases and human genes/genomes. Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).



Following success in the New York State Public High School Athletic Association's Sectional Cheerleading Championship hosted at Mahopac High School, our Pearl River High School Pirate Cheer team topped the charts and secured the title in the **Small School Large Team division!** Our student-athletes competed amongst a number of other teams hailing from Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess and Rockland counties. Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Pearl River High School students enrolled in social studies teacher Jeffrey Michael's U.S. History class completed an in-depth research project centered on highlighting lesser-known and lesser-celebrated African American historical figures in celebration of **Black History Month**. Creating an informative flyer featuring an image of their selected individual, a brief personal background and a list of their impacts on American history, students selected a Black historical figure based on their personal interest in their contributions to fields ranging from the arts and sciences, to literature, to politics, to athletics. Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).



On February 18, our District celebrated the 38th-annual **Rockland BOCES**-sponsored Rockland Read-In as our students excitedly spent time during the school day to read for pleasure! Throughout the day, our K-4 students in each of our elementary schools set aside time to read books of their choice – and some even shared their favorite stories with their classmates. Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

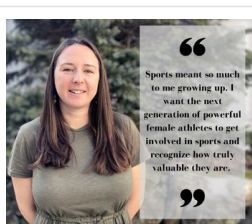
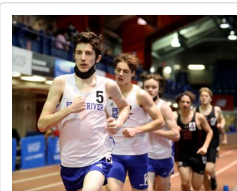
Drawing inspiration from organic forms found in nature, seventh grade student-artists in Erin Girling's art class at Pearl River Middle School have just begun to explore and brainstorm microtile designs as part of a collaborative clay project as they tuned into a virtual Zoom Q&A session to speak with ceramic artist Heather Knight. Students took turns asking her questions about her artwork, her unique pieces and her inspiration. Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).





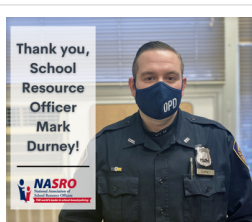
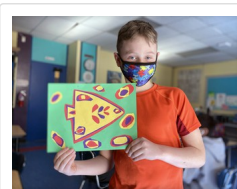
kindness and consideration from their classroom and amongst their peers as they shared what qualities they love most about each other – reflecting on memories, interactions and exchanges in order to select descriptive words to describe one another! Across our District, each of our school buildings celebrated [#RandomActsofKindnessDay](#) on February 17 with the goal to [#MakeKindnessTheNorm](#) through simple gestures, compliments, activities, readings and lessons centered on promoting positive behaviors and interactions with others. Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Our Pearl River High School Boys and Girls Track & Field teams secured the boys title with 115 points and the girls title with 119 points in all three girls and boys relays at the Section 1 Class B Indoor Track & Field Championships held at the New Balance Armory in Manhattan on February 14! Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

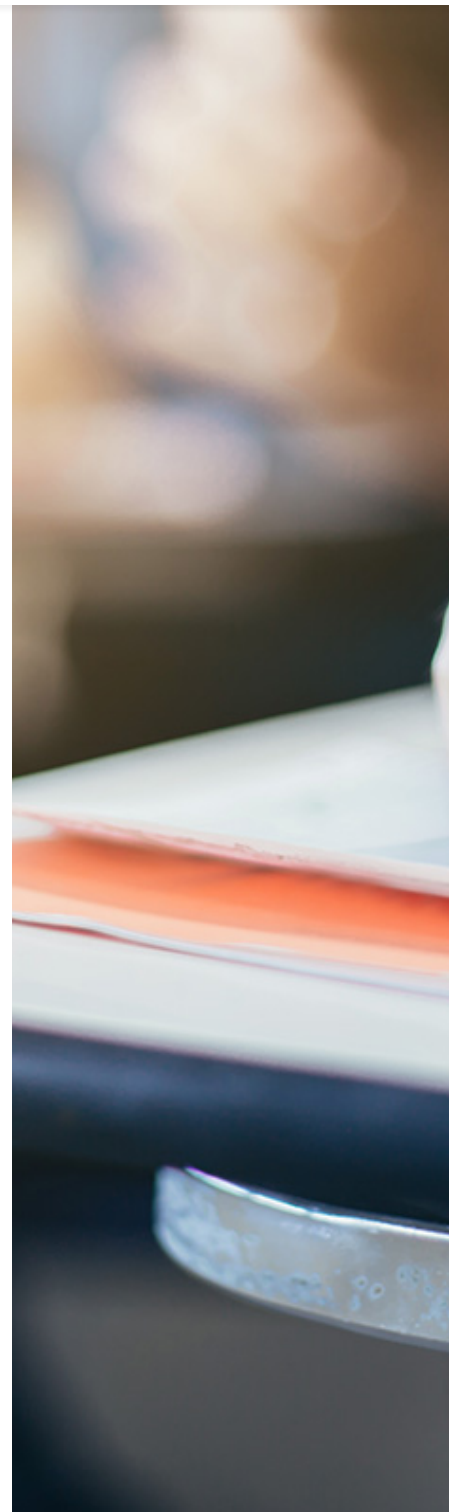


Congratulations to Pearl River High School special education teacher and seven-year veteran athletics coach Amy Voelkel on receiving the 2022 Lauren Buonocore National Girls & Women in Sports Award honor! Each year, the Pearl River Athletics Department presents this award – honoring past and current contributors to women's athletics in the District. During the month of February, the positive impacts of inclusion of women in sports and their achievements are celebrated and commemorated along with addressing the challenges regarding equal participation of women in sports activities. Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Fifth-graders in art teacher Erin Girling's period 4 art class at Pearl River Middle School worked on creating molas from stencils and construction paper as they studied the design elements and principles of hand-made textiles – part of the indigenous Kuna peoples' traditional clothing! Incorporating artistic elements of balance, line, shape and variety, these students began the initial stenciling, drawing, cutting and layering stages to replicate molas designs on paper instead of fabric. Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

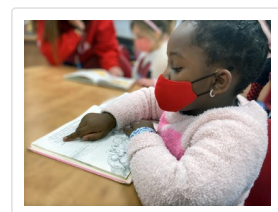
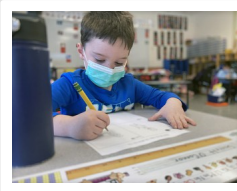


February 15 marked the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO)'s National School Resource Officer (SRO) Appreciation Day and our District spotlighted our very own SRO Mark Durney for his dedication to the protection of our schools' students, faculty and staff. A full-time law enforcement officer with the Orangetown Police Department trained in school-based policing and crisis response, Durney serves as a valuable and integral member of





At Lincoln Avenue Elementary School, elementary school social worker Eric Borcharding, visited Margaret Lynch's kindergarten class to deliver a lesson on what empathy means – and how it can serve as a way for us to understand how someone else feels. Going around the classroom, Borcharding asked each student to show – through facial expressions and body language – how certain feelings might look to others. Kindergarteners participated in an activity, taking turns standing at the front of the room and displaying an emotion for the class to mirror. Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).



On February 14, our District not only celebrated Valentine's Day but also Library Lovers Day! Searching for and sounding out 'red' words, kindergarteners in Tobi Breslaw's class at Evans Park Elementary School delved into a variety of books available in the school library for readers' enjoyment. Students pointed out regular and irregular high-frequency words and sight words in order to gain an understanding of the story. Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

From February 7-11, our District celebrated American School Counselor Association's National School Counseling Week! During [#NSCW22](#), we spotlighted the tremendous impact school counselors have on helping our K-12 students plan, goal-set and effectively prepare for college and career readiness. In each of their roles as school counselors, these individuals work to cultivate student progress and success. Make sure you read more about each of our school counselors on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)!



Fourth grade writers in Robyn Smith and Danielle Ritter's class at Evans Park Elementary School celebrated their writing 'glows and grows' – sharing sections of their essays they're proud of and providing one another with constructive feedback! Through peer revision and suggestions, students experimented with different craft techniques, expanded their word choice, used a variety of transitions and hooked the reader with a strong lead. Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

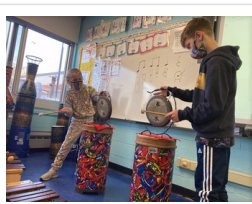
First-graders in Colleen Rourke's class at Franklin Avenue Elementary School discussed ways in which they can effectively solve everyday problems – like navigating turns on playground equipment – by participating in an interactive lesson with school counselor Morgan O'Donohue. Singing and dancing along to a catchy beat, students practiced the important steps when confronted with a problem: S – say the problem, T – think of solutions, E – explore consequences and P – pick the best solution (STEP). Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).





classes at Pearl River Middle School worked to solve equations posed by the other class in order to 'escape'. By successfully completing these types of equations, seventh-graders explored a mix of addition, subtraction, multiplication or division – practicing methods of combining like terms or using properties to determine solutions. Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

In anticipation of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics and in alignment with February's school-wide theme of empathy, Pearl River Middle School students celebrated World Cultures Day – incorporating the teachings of PRMS' advisory program while celebrating their own unique cultural similarities and differences! Students and staff wore clothing representative of a culture or heritage they associate with, and discussed their cultural identity and experiences with their classmates via presentations or by bringing in special objects to share with their peers. Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).



Inside Glyn Nixon's music class at Evans Park Elementary School, third-graders in Jennifer Coppola/Katherine O'Neill's class practiced Chinese New Year songs on their instruments – taking turns using the xylophone, glockenspiel and gong. These students not only learned about the traditions and celebrations of the Lunar New Year through singing and playing along to a festive song, but they also practiced using keys C, D, F, G, and A on the pentatonic scale! Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Lincoln Avenue Elementary School first-graders in Ali Stone and Carolyn Murphy's classes celebrated a very Kung Hei Fat Choy (Happy Chinese New Year) as they marched through the hallways as part of their very own parade! Students learned all about the customs and traditions of the Lunar New Year – watching a traditional dragon dance, and reading and coloring a mini book together as a class as they explored the unique festivities part of the day's celebrations. Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).



Second-graders in Nancy McCarthy's class at Evans Park Elementary School participated in interactive math games -- learning that practice makes progress! In pairs, students engaged in partner math practice, playing Spin It to Win It and 2-Digit Addition Roll as they explored number combinations and patterns in order to solve addition problems. Read more on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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