

A Message from the Spackenkill Superintendent



One District, Multiple Paths to Excellence

January 8, 2021

Dear Spackenkill Community,

I wanted to say a few words about the disturbing events that unfolded at the Capitol this week. Many of our students are keenly aware of this situation and shocking images have been widely circulated in the media, including social media, which creates its own reality. Obviously, this situation impacts us all, but children are particularly at risk. We need to help children make sense of this unacceptable turn of events, and we need to talk about it without loaded political views. If you have any concerns, please contact your child's teacher, principal, or guidance counselor. We would like to offer support to everyone who needs it. In these challenging times, we can turn to each other for comfort and strength. We need to encourage positive change and peaceful resolution to America's issues while also condemning violence and actions that undermine our values. We all have a right to disagree and have our own opinions, but we must do so respectfully and with humility and empathy.

That having been said, I certainly hope the break was a restful time for your family. While we wish that we had been able to return to school in Hybrid 1, we are also aware that COVID-19 is still very much with us, as cases continue to climb in a pattern typical of the post-holiday surge, when you look at positivity rates and transmission dynamics in the community. We currently have a number of positive cases and people who have had to quarantine due to COVID, which would certainly have disrupted our schedule this week, had we been in school in Hybrid 1. As of today, we do plan on resuming Hybrid 1 on January 19th, conditions permitting.

Please note that we will resume sending out wellness screening emails and text messages next week even though school will still be held remotely. This will begin on Monday, depending on your child's cohort. Please respond to the screening so that we can be updated on students' wellness status and if they are currently quarantining, awaiting COVID-19 test results, or have tested positive for COVID-19.

As Governor Cuomo has said in a news conference this week, New York aims to make COVID-19 vaccination available and distributed at a faster rate throughout the state. Healthcare workers are first in line, and our nurses are among those who have been offered the vaccinations at this time. Teachers and staff are in the next phase to receive the vaccine, hopefully over the next few weeks. After that, the general population will become eligible for the vaccine, but not on a large scale until March-April, according to the Governor.

Google Meet Issue

We have been hearing about issues with Google Meet this week. Our Director of Technology has been researching the problem and discovered that it extends across our county and could possibly be a regional issue. Please know that we are aware of the situation and are working to resolve it. We thank you for your patience.

COVID-19 Update and Dashboard

Since we started the school year, we have had 29 positive COVID-19 cases. [You can see the breakdown by school on the NY State Report card](#): Please continue to consult the NY State Report Card for updates. It's important that, even if they are remote, if a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, they should email their principal so that we know what's going on in the community and can continue to make informed decisions.

From Our Young Artists

Mrs. Ciccone's Nassau artists have been busy creating colorful art to cheer winter days. "Like many people over the holiday season, our first graders overloaded on the many sweet treats and baked goods to be found in these overly decadent drawings," writes Mrs. Ciccone. By contrast, second graders created imaginary cities that are so fanciful and definitely worth exploring.



Above, left to right: Some sweets and treats from first grade artists Angelina Barcia, Julia Yaeger, Emma Yaeger, and Amelia Piechowicz.



Clockwise from top left: Some architectural selections from second grade artists Tersnim Mhiri, Dejah Williams, Anthony Conklin, Gabrielle Adjei-Badu, and Robert Zelinski.

Community Foundations Scholarships



Scholarships are available through the Community Foundations for graduating high school seniors and college students who plan on or are attending college.

2021 Scholarships Available!

Last year over \$350,000 in scholarships were awarded to students in Dutchess, Putnam, Ulster, and surrounding counties to help pay college expenses.

[Click here to begin an application.](#)

Remember: We have one more week of remote learning before we expect to return in Hybrid 1 on January 19th.

Sincerely,

Paul M. Fanuele, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



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