

# A Message from the Spackenkill Superintendent



## One District, Multiple Paths to Excellence

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October 2, 2020

Dear Spackenkill Community,

The Return-to-School Committee met this past Wednesday for a Hybrid 1 Update. High school and middle school principals reported that both had a positive response. There's no question that teachers and kids seemed happy to work with each other in a live forum, whether at home or in school.

Both secondary principals noted that it's impressive how well in-person students are following safety rules, hallway guidelines, and social distancing in general. Teachers have been collaborating, sharing ideas with their colleagues, and making everyone more proficient in remote learning. Here's an interesting twist at the high school: Teachers have been using chemistry beaker stands to hold cameras that facilitate remote learning. These makeshift cameras are an inexpensive and innovative solution to a hard-to-find device due to a scarcity created by COVID-19.

Elementary schools have also been running smoothly. "Our first two weeks of school have been fantastic," says Nassau Principal Erik Lynch. "It's apparent that both staff and students have a newfound appreciation for human connection after being away from school for so long. We are very proud of our students for understanding and following our guidelines and we appreciate the time and effort that parents put into preparing their children prior to their return to school."

For Hagan Principal John Farrell, "Unquestionably, September 10th was one of the most, if not *the* most, anticipated first days of school in my career. Hagan couldn't wait to get kids safely back to the building and into our remote classrooms so that we could begin doing what we have all been working so hard to do—once again begin the process of teaching and learning. We know that adjusting to our hybrid schedule has been a significant challenge for everyone—students, parents, teachers. We have really appreciated everyone's patience and flexibility."

We'd like to give a big shout-out to Doreen Wright, Director of Transportation, for all she has done to get students to where they need to be, whether it is high school students who need transportation to BOCES or special ed students who need to get to their buildings daily, and of course all the in-person cohorts who come to the buildings each week. Of note: Assistant Superintendent Dr. Lori Mulford pointed out that we have exceeded state guidelines in bringing our special needs students back to the classroom, and that definitely is a point of pride for the District.

### Sports Update

Athletics Director Marco Lanzoni reports that football and field hockey teams held their first open workouts under the lights on September 29: "It rained, but they loved every minute of it," says Mr. Lanzoni. Follow @SpackSports to learn more.



Above: Football and field hockey open workouts under the lights on our new turf field.

### Outdoor Facility Usage

At Tuesday's Board of Education meeting, the Board decided that during the COVID-19 pandemic, there will be no public use of the track and field/school grounds during the school day hours, which run from 7 am to 2:15 pm. This also applies when there is an after-school activity, such as a game or practice, involving the track and field. However, our residents can use the facilities after hours and weekends. When the pandemic is over, we will institute a badge process to allow district residents further access.

### Are You Getting Text Messages from Us?

Parents/Guardians:

If you would like to receive important text messages from us, including wellness screenings and school closing or delay information, please make sure we have your correct mobile phone number on file. [Check on parent portal](#) or with your school's office.

Once we have your correct mobile number, please also opt in to text messages by texting Yes or Y to 67-587. Alternatively, scan the QR code below and hit "send." Standard message and data rates may apply.

**Opt-In from your mobile  
now! Just send "Y" or  
"Yes" to 67587.**



\*[Terms and Conditions](#) – Message frequency varies. Standard message and data rates may apply. Reply HELP for help. Text STOP to cancel. Mobile carriers are not liable for delayed or undelivered messages. See [schoolmessenger.com/txt](http://schoolmessenger.com/txt) for more info.

### Holiday Changes to Our School Schedule

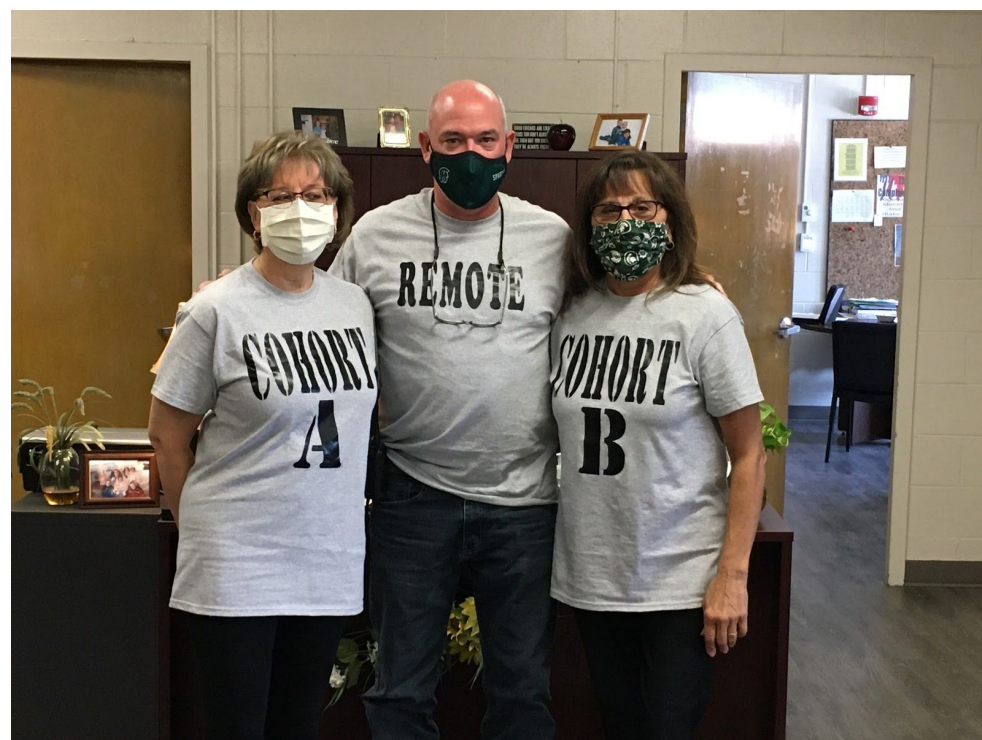
The following changes will be made to the first quarter calendar:

- **For the elementary schools:** Because Columbus Day (October 12th) and Election Day/Superintendent's Conference Day (November 3rd) are holidays/days off, school will be in session in person on Wednesday, October 14th and Wednesday, November 4th. Full Remote student schedules will also shift to those days.
- **For the high school:** Because Election Day/Superintendent's Conference Day (November 3rd) and Veterans Day (November 11th) are holidays/days off for students, Monday, November 2nd and Monday, Nov. 9th, will be in-person days and remote schedules will also shift to those days. You will receive further information on which cohorts attend on which days from the high school.
- **No changes for Todd Middle School**

**More Photos from this Week follow:**



Today we celebrated the retirements of two beloved teachers. *Top row:* High School teacher Maureen Tremblay completed her last day today after 45 years of teaching. She began her teaching career at Spackenkill on September 1, 1979, and taught in other districts previously for four years. She is shown with High School Principal Steve Malkischer and Superintendent Paul Fanuele. *Bottom row:* Nassau Elementary teacher Mary McGurl has been teaching at Spackenkill for 25 years. She began here September 1, 1995, after teaching at other districts. At Spackenkill, she taught several grade levels over the years at Hagan and Nassau. We wish these outstanding teachers the very best!



Above: The Hagan main office has taken a unique approach to keeping track of schedules.



We're so proud of Spackenkill High School students who volunteered at the ReStore of Habitat for Humanity over the summer. *Pictured above, left to right* are Katie Gagliardi, Zachary Foroglou, Brian Breslow, Anoushka Swain, and Natalie Romasco.



Above: At the high school, students learn the same lesson both remotely and in person.



Above: Volunteers for the Elementary PTA distribute mums at a fall fundraiser.

Sincerely,

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



Please see flyer(s) that might be of interest:

[Coat Drive](#)

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