Dear Spackenkill Community,

The big news story this week is the Board of Education's appointment of my successor, Dr. Paul Fanuele. I would like to add my congratulations and feel confident that the district will be in good hands upon the completion of my term of service at the end of June. Dr. Fanuele and I will remain in communication over the next several months to ensure a smooth transition. I would like to thank our interview team, the community that provided feedback on the candidates, and especially the Board of Education and Board Clerk, Sandra Barbieri, who worked tirelessly beginning last January up until the culmination in Dr. Fanuele's appointment Tuesday evening!

We all have been waiting in anticipation of the new track and field construction. It was exciting to watch the old track being ripped apart to begin the process of reconstruction. The goal is to complete the new complex on or about June 1, depending on winter weather, but well before the fall athletic season and the opening of school.

As winter weather arrives, the annual determination of school closings, delays, and the occasional early dismissal befalls superintendents. We do our best to follow various weather forecasts and, unfortunately, they seem to often change. My first priority is to keep school open as long as it is safe to do so.

On December 18th, we will welcome our new Nassau Elementary principal, Erik Lynch, to the district. He will be working with Principal Weisel for approximately two weeks of transition planning.

My best,

Mark Villanti, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
At its December 10th meeting at Todd Middle School, the Spackenkill Union Free School District Board of Education named Dr. Paul Fanuele as the next Superintendent of Schools, starting July 1st, 2020, to succeed Dr. Mark Villanti, who is retiring at the end of the school year. Dr. Fanuele currently is the Executive Principal in the Arlington Central School District. The selection is the result of a lengthy search that produced some 50 qualified applicants from diverse professional backgrounds.

"We are extraordinarily pleased with the outcome of this search process," said Board President Tom Kaith. "After months of deliberation, the Board selected Dr. Fanuele as the best candidate to carry forward the vision of the district. His track record from the Arlington Central School District and his previous role as Principal of Spackenkill High School, from 2006 to 2012, demonstrate his capability to lead this outstanding school system toward its goals and carry on the tradition of excellence for which Spackenkill is known. We are excited to welcome him back."

Dr. Fanuele completed the doctoral program in Educational Leadership at Manhattanville College and holds a Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Administration and Supervision from the State University of New York College at New Paltz and a Bachelor of Science in Public Administration from the University of Scranton. Dr. Fanuele has served as President of the School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS) and is on the Board of Directors of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

"I am honored to have been chosen for this position and embrace the opportunity to return to serve as an educational leader and complete my professional journey," said Dr. Fanuele. "I value the strong sense of community that permeates the district and seek to build upon current initiatives and the efforts that I contributed to as a member of the Spackenkill team." Click here to read the Poughkeepsie Journal article.

Second Graders Support Our Troops

The second grade classes sponsored a community service project to benefit the men and women in the US Armed Forces serving in Kuwait. The classes created handmade cards and a variety of simple items to donate to the troops. Families also donated items by adding them to a box in the lobby. Students and teachers then packed up the boxes for mailing so that troops receive them in time for the holidays.

Above: Mrs. Turner's class made patriotic snowmen holiday cards for the troops.
Above: The second grade team got busy on Thursday boxing up donations for mailing.

**Capital Project Update: Field Work Has Begun**

Phase 3 of the Capital Project is now active: Construction of the new track and field began on Tuesday, December 10th. When it's all complete, there will be a turf field with a new track, new bleachers, a student-designed concession stand, and lighting for night games.
Sophomores Bake for a Cause

Sophomores Vanessa Aagaard and Nadine Deeb continue their mission to raise money for Cookies for Kids, which supports pediatric cancer research. The duo got to work this week in the High School cafeteria baking over 1,000 cookies, which they planned to sell at the Hagan and High School concerts, as well as after school. Last spring, the students raised over $500 for the cause and hope to raise even more this year!

Hagan Students Gather Gifts

This week, the Hagan Holiday Shop was in full swing. Students visited at lunchtime and browsed from a selection of affordable gifts, ranging from mugs to mood rings. Thank you to the Elementary PTA for sponsoring the shop and giving the students a chance to find gifts for family and friends in a relaxed setting. There was even a gift-wrapping station!
Chorus, Beginner Band, and Beginner Strings. On Friday, Third Grade Chorus, Fourth and Fifth Grade Chorus, Concert Band, and Gold Strings played for students and staff at the In-School Concert, working under the direction of Kody Andreas, Jeannine Berube, Pennie Burgess, and Kim Valentine. Holden Malorana was the accompanist for Chorus. The students did a wonderful job singing and playing both fun and classic holiday songs. Stay tuned for Elementary Concert #2, scheduled for Monday, December 16th.

[Click here to read the Hagan Elementary Concert #1 program.]

Above: Beginner Band rehearses in preparation for their concert.

Above: Scenes from the Hagan In-School Concert. Clockwise from top left: Kody Andreas conducts Third Grade Chorus. Fifth Grade Chorus sings. Ms. Valentine with Gold Strings. Mrs. Burgess with Concert Band.
Once again, the Spackenkill Marching Band participated in this year's Celebration of Lights Parade in Poughkeepsie. The students lit up the chilly night with their festive instrument decorations and kept the parade in step to their drumbeats.

**Mathletes Dominate DUSO**

Congratulations to Spack A, which took the Dutchess-Ulster-Sullivan-Orange County (DUSO) Math League meet with 22 points. Spack B was third with 19 points, and Spack C was fourth with 18 points. Nick Ristic had a perfect score of 6, while Emily Ma and Leo Herrera each scored 5. Shinrea Su, Alex Zhu, Morgan Lo, Nicolas Colucci, Brian Shi, Luke Hannan, and Emily Jea each scored 4.

**Todd Cadenza Orchestra Entertains IBMers**

The Todd Cadenza Orchestra, under the direction of Mrs. Gretchen Franca, visited IBM this Wednesday and played for staff during their holiday luncheon. The students (and their instruments) wore festive accessories. It is a testimony to the excellence of the musicians to be invited to this annual event!
15 Croft Road, Poughkeepsie, NY

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Mission: Inspired by a tradition of excellence and a spirit of continuous improvement, the Spackenkill School District will provide all of our students with the academic and social skills necessary to pursue their goals and become responsible citizens in an interdependent global community.

Vision: All Spackenkill graduates will be lifelong learners who are inspired to pursue their dreams and contribute to the global society.

Please submit story ideas to mary.forsell@sufsdny.org