Dear Spackenkill Community,

Today all Dutchess County superintendents met with the Dutchess County Health Director and several members of his team to receive updated information on the coronavirus and discuss school preparedness. It is our understanding that to date the number of confirmed cases in the US is small and that there are no confirmed cases in New York State, so that is good news. This virus, however, is spreading quickly, and no one knows for sure how significant it will become.

My point in writing this note is to simply convey that county superintendents maintain a strong relationship with county health officials. We will continue to collaborate and work together as partners and to follow the most updated guidance that the CDC, NYSDOH, and our local health department can provide. In general, please follow common-sense precautions: keep children home when they demonstrate flu-like symptoms and consult with your school nurse if you have questions. We can’t emphasize enough the importance of frequent handwashing. As a district, we will continue to clean our schools as thoroughly as possible.

The Todd Musical, *Shrek*, is this weekend. My wife and I plan to attend tonight. It promises to be a great production. We are so proud of our student actors and stage crew and our two directors. Mr. Shanks and Mr. K. Show our Todd family your support by attending one of the three weekend shows!

Finally, one of our parents mentioned to me Spackenkill’s rating by US News with great pride. Apparently, he had not read one of our previous newsletters. We are including the results again in case you have not read them
before. I am so thankful for the many great teachers, administrators, students, and family members who value education.

My best,

Mark Villanti, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

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**Health Information Update**

*Please click on this link for a CDC guide to handwashing.*

*Please click on this link from the Dutchess County Department of Health for Updates on the coronavirus.*

*Please click here to read a message from the Superintendent sent to parents/guardians on Feb. 5, 2020, regarding coronavirus.*

*Please click here to read a letter received from the Department of Health on Feb. 6, 2020, regarding coronavirus.*

*Please click here to read a letter from Superintendent Villanti and Elizabeth Giancaspro, District Nurse Coordinator, regarding the flu*

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**Todd Fundraiser Scores Again**

At the Spiking for Sparrow’s Charity Volleyball Tournament last Friday, volunteers raised $2,300 for Sparrow’s Nest. This awesome community event was spearheaded by Mrs. Papo, Mrs. McGuire, and Mrs. Rogers. It brought students and teachers together in a very spirited competition. We cannot thank enough all of the students and staff who made donations, as well as Marist College Volleyball players and coaches, teacher volunteers, and Student Government. All of them donated their time to make this event so successful! The money raised will feed 89 families who have a family member going through cancer treatment.

A big shout-out and congratulations to team Beetlejuice, who not only won the student tournament, but who were also able to beat the teacher team! Great job!!!
Thank you also to the JV Spackenkill Volleyball players. We’re appreciative of Principal Doherty, Assistant Principal Cormier, and Superintendent Villanti for their strong support. Dr. Villanti also got on the court and made a few great serves!

**Above, standing left to right:** Teacher team Josh Riley, Rachel Abrams, Erica Sautter, Lindsay Pescetti, Karin McGuire, Jonathan Shanks, Kim Rogers, Ryan Hannigan, Serge Young, and Lisa Papo.

**Above, kneeling left to right:** Beetlejuice team Elle Hanaburgh, Elena Sung, Aidan Rogers, Dylan Updike, Dan Collins, Dan Ristic, Hassan Milligan, and Jaiden Yates. Not pictured is Joe DelForno.

**Above:** Marist athletes and their coaches came out for the event.
Above, clockwise from top left: Teachers Karin McGuire and Kim Rogers with Sparrow's Nest founder Krista Jones, Michele Brenner with Albert Scanlon, Lisa Papo and Serge Young on the court, Dr. Villanti getting ready to serve, the blue team practicing with a Marist athlete, Karin McGuire setting up the pizza station, student teams competing, Principal Doherty making the rounds (center).

National Merit Finalist Announced

We are proud to announce that Sabah Choudhury has been named a Finalist in the 2020 competition for the National Merit Scholarship Awards. She is among the 16,000 Semifinalists named in September 2019 who met the National Merit Scholarship Program requirements to advance to finalist standing. High school students enter the program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®) and by meeting published program entry and participation requirements. The finalists are in the running for corporate, National Merit, and college-sponsored scholarships that will be awarded this spring and summer. Congratulations on this great accomplishment!
Above: Superintendent Mark Villanti (far left) and Principal Steve Malkischer with Sabah.

Students Celebrate the Arts

After a successful coffeehouse event in the fall, the Art & Literary Club and the Music Department at the high school recently hosted Arti Gras, another coffeehouse-style celebration of student creativity. Mr. Romani, Mr. Calderone, Mr. Maiorana, and Ms. Joy organized the event. Students expressed their creativity in a variety of ways, including reciting poetry, reading short stories, singing songs, and playing musical instruments.
Shrek The Musical Jr. Is THIS WEEKEND!

You won’t want to miss Shrek the Musical Jr. at Todd. Take a look at the images below: Students have been busy rehearsing away with Mr. Shanks and Mr. K. Set crew has created some amazing scenery.
The show runs February 28th and 29th at 7 pm and March 1 at 2 pm.

Black History In the Spotlight

Mrs. Travis, Mr. Scanlon, and Todd Middle School's Student Government organized an open mic on Thursday to celebrate Black History month. Students and faculty came together to share poetry, songs, and quotes written by African Americans with themes of hope, perseverance, and equality. Participants could also share original work they created as well. The event was a huge success! Students were well received by their peers, with a few standing ovations!
Students and staff read poetry, sang songs, and made impromptu speeches honoring African Americans.

Above: A Student Government interactive display honoring black women in history.

Dr. Fanuele Presents to Congress

Dr. Paul Fanuele (shown at left) recently participated in the Congressional Caucus to End the Youth Vaping Epidemic. As one of six panelists, he briefed Congress on the importance of stopping the vaping epidemic in schools in order to keep students
safe. Panelists also advocated for the passage of #HR2339, a strong bill that would help combat youth vaping.

Dr. Fanuele is currently the Executive Principal in the Arlington Central School District and will become the Spackenkill Superintendent in July of this year. He is on the Board of Directors of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and is Past President of the School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS).

**CONGRESSIONAL CAUCUS TO END THE YOUTH VAPING EPIDEMIC**

Briefing on the Youth Vaping Epidemic
This briefing will offer opportunities for all to hear political rationale of the youth vaping epidemic and discuss a 5-point plan for addressing the epidemic and the health issues of the victims of youth use.

February 19, 2020
2:30 pm
401 Cannon HOB

**Panelists:**
- Dennis Henigan – Vice President of Legal and Regulatory Affairs
  Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids
- Dr. Susan Walford MD – Pediatrician
  American Academy of Pediatrics’ Section on Tobacco Control
- Shellie Breslauer – DC Advocate
  Parents Against Vaping E-Cigarettes
- Dr. Paul Fanuelle – Executive Principal
  Arlington High School, Lakeville, NY
- Joseph Vazillo – Student
  SUNY Sullivan County Community College
- Jacqueline Bolen – Counsel
  House Energy and Commerce

Above: Agenda from the Congressional event.

**District Rankings Are Impressive**

The U.S. News Best High Schools rankings include data on more than 23,000 public high schools in 50 states and the District of Columbia. More than 17,000 schools were ranked on six factors based on their performance on state assessments and how well they prepare students for college. Spackenkill’s ranking places us at the top 7% of NYS high schools and top 6% of US high schools. Click on the image below to visit the site and learn more:
Work on the track and field continues throughout this mild winter. Click on the video below to see the crew in action. Director of Facilities Dave Downes tells us that the large rocks lining the stream are for “the mitigation of local storm water. They help with erosion and keep drainage open and away from weeds.” The video also shows a long retainer wall, put in as a barrier between 100-year-flood water and the track and field. An 850-seat grandstand will be added in front of that wall. A large pile of dirt is visible, and the field will continue to be excavated. “We will add different layers of soil and gravel to create drainage around a network of pipes.”
A Message to Veterans

A program for veterans to receive high school diplomas became a law November 11, 2019, with the approval of the Governor. Under the law, the Commissioner of Education will develop a program whereby any veteran of the Armed Forces who has served on active duty in the United States Armed Forces and who was unable, for any reason, to complete a secondary education, may be awarded a high school diploma based on knowledge and experience gained while in service. If you are a veteran who fits these criteria or know of someone who does, please contact Spackenkill High School Principal Steve Malkischer: 845-463-7810.

Transportation Notice

Parents and guardians must have requests for private providers to the Spackenkill UFSD Transportation Department by April 1. Requests must be filed every year. For more information, please call Doreen Wright, Director of Transportation: 463-7800.

- Print a Request for Private/Parochial School Transportation
- Print a Request for Daycare Transportation

The Harlem Wizards are coming to town!
Save the Date: March 13th, 7 pm SHS Gym.
This fundraiser is sponsored by the Elementary PTA.

Click here to get your tickets!

Earning Their Badges
Third grade Girl Scout Brownie Troop 10941 took a field trip to The Grandview to earn their baking badges. Executive Pastry Chef Kasey Posadas instructed the troop how to make savory cheddar and scallion scones and customized cookies. The girls were able to choose their own ingredients and create their perfect snacks. They took home what they created to share with their families.

As respectful Speackenkill students, they followed up their trip by each writing personal thank you cards to The Grandview's Chef Kasey, outlining what they loved about their experience. The troop really represented Speackenkill well!

100 Days Smarter!

Kindergartners celebrated 100 days of learning in school on Thursday. In Mrs. Lombardi's class, students made cereal necklaces, carefully counting by 20s to make 100. Students also completed the question, "If I had 100 dollars, I would..." Some of the answers were "buy flowers," "buy a mansion," and "buy a Lamborghini" (not necessarily spelled this way). In Mrs. Cunningham's classroom, students were busy with activities like building a 100-cup tower. Kindergartners enjoyed wearing their 100-day hats and hand-painted t-shirts.

Above: All the kindergartners gather for a portrait to commemorate the 100th day of
Above: Kindergartners counted out 100 in multiple ways on Thursday.

15 Croft Road, Poughkeepsie, NY

(845) 463-7800

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@suiefsny.org