Dear Spackenkill Community,

Schools districts and elected officials need to be strong partners. We feel fortunate at Spackenkill that we have active relationships at the town, county, and state levels. A good example of that is the press release attached here and linked below. Senator Serino and Assemblymember Barrett have been powerful advocates to right the wrong that has come out of the New York State Education Department’s draconian penalty. I also want to thank the over 550 of you who have contacted the Governor urging him to sign our bill. I wish I could tell you whether Governor Cuomo will sign the bill. We are nervously awaiting his decision that will likely be made by next Friday.

What a week! Each of our buildings acknowledged Halloween in an appropriate manner. Any of you who attended the Nassau Parade or the celebrations throughout the district would agree that they were managed well by our teachers and administrators.

Congratulations to all of our high school students who were inducted into the National Honor Society. This is a great milestone in your academic career.

Just a reminder that Tuesday, November 5th is Election Day. Our high school is used as a polling location. As in the past, parking is available across from the Richard D. Woolley Auditorium. There will be no classes for students that day throughout the district, as we are conducting professional development on Superintendent’s Conference Day.

My best,

Mark Villanti, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Syracuse.com recently ran a list of the top 50 districts and schools in upstate New York, using data from Niche.com. Spackenkill rankings are as follows:

District - #9, A+
High School - # 14, A+
Middle School - # 22, A
Elementary School - # 43 A (keep in mind that there are three times the number of elementary schools compared to secondary schools)

Congratulations to administrators, teachers, support staff, parents and students on this great accomplishment.

Read the article here.

Notably, the District is also in the top 5% nationally for safety!

Read about the methodology used to determine the safety rating.

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**Take Action!**

Please click here to send an email or a letter to Governor Cuomo regarding signing Bill S.1239/A.4069.

Please click here to read a press release dated November 1 from Senator Serino and Assemblymember Barrett

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**National Honor Society Inducts New Members**

On October 24th, Spackenkill Chapter 16077 of the National Honor Society inducted 29 juniors and three seniors into the National Honor Society (NHS). NHS elevates a school’s commitment to the values of scholarship, service, leadership, and character. These four pillars have been associated with membership in the organization since its inception in 1921. Chapter membership not only recognizes students for their accomplishments, but challenges them to develop further through active involvement in school activities and community service.

Click here to read the program.
Learning Takes Off

In Courtney Cunningham’s kindergarten classroom, students recently enjoyed joining two-dimensional shapes to make a rocket ship.

Calling All Veterans

District veterans: You are cordially invited to attend the Veterans Day Assembly and breakfast at Todd Middle School beginning at 9 am on Friday, November 8th. Please take a moment to read an invitation letter from Todd Principal Dan Doherty.
Taking Steps Against Hunger

On Sunday, October 20th, the Spackenkill Crop Walk team, as well as members of the High School French Club, took part in the 43rd annual Crop Walk against world hunger. The event entailed a six-mile walk around the city of Poughkeepsie with three rest stops. Students secured sponsors who made generous contributions to the cause of alleviating hunger internationally, nationally, and locally. Twenty-five percent of the money collected is returned to such Dutchess County organizations as The Lunch Box, Dutchess Outreach, and The Soup Kitchen at Beulah Baptist Church.

What a great day to do something positive for our community while enjoying each other’s company and exploring the city’s interesting neighborhoods! Thank you to advisers Jim Seigue and Brittany Hart.

Pictured above, left to right: Sam Kelson, Emily Cohen, Udaya Rattan, Abby Strauss, Nick Foroglou, Ofeilbea Micah, Sydney Fitzgerald, Ava Greiner, Lyn Kim, Nick Coucci, Rachel Li, and Brian Shi. Several other students were not able to attend, but did collect contributions.

Spotlight on Alumni: Grads Appear on SNL

In case you missed it, Spackenkill alumnae Amanda Bailey (’08) and Joanna Mattrey (’05) performed with Chance the Rapper on SNL this past weekend. Strings teacher Kim Valentine brought their television appearances to our attention, as Amanda was once her student. She believes this is the third time for both of them! She also recalls how Amanda visited her Silver Strings a few years back and demonstrated how to play rap on a stringed instrument. Amanda has played with Yo-Yo Ma with the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, while Joanna freelances as a musician around New York City and has many professional credits. Maybe you will recognize them in the back row. Amanda is playing the violin and Joanna plays the viola. Follow the link to see them:

English teachers from Todd Middle School and Spackenkill High School joined educators from all over the state when they attended the New York State English Council Conference in Albany on October 17th and 18th. Highlights of this year’s conference included addresses made by keynote speakers Kate Roberts, Brendan Kiely, Kevin Lewis, and Laura Halse Anderson. Between these addresses, our teachers attended an array of break-out sessions, which showcased ideas to implement in their own English classrooms.

Above, top photo: Todd teachers Elizabeth Morehead and Julie Grega with keynote speaker Brendan Kiely. Above, bottom photo: During a book signing, Elizabeth Morehead meets keynote speaker and author Laura Halse Anderson.
Little Shop of Horrors Coming Up Soon!

On November 8th, 9th, and 10th, Spack Onstage presents their fall musical, Little Shop of Horrors. A horror-comedy, this iconic show tells the story of Seymour, a meek floral assistant manipulated by a people-eating plant. Come enjoy the infectious music—combining rock, Motown, and Broadway—and see if Seymour gets the girl before the fast-talking plant gets everyone else!

Click here to get your tickets now!

Visit spackonstage.com to learn more.

Follow Spack Onstage:

Behavioral Consultant Visits Nassau

Dr. Donna Riter worked with Nassau teachers on social emotional learning techniques this week. Teachers commented on how much they enjoyed her presentations and her down-to-earth, practical advice. Dr. Riter also spent time in classrooms doing observations and attended a social worker and psychologist working lunch. Her next visit to the district will be at Hagan on November 25th and 26th.
Computer-Savvy Pumpkin Fun

Technology Integration Teacher Mrs. Byrne worked with second and third grade classes on Build Your Own Jack-O-Lantern slides projects. The students really got involved with their creations, as shown below!
Halloween Happenings Around the District

Nassau Elementary School

School Resource Officer Steve Doughty and Dolores Spero of the Town of Poughkeepsie Police Department paid a visit to the kindergartners to teach them about Halloween safety. After watching a video that demonstrated Halloween best practices, the students reviewed what they learned with Officer Steve. They learned that it’s important to choose costumes that fit so you don’t trip on them and that makeup is better than masks to create a Halloween face, because obscure vision. Wearing something reflective at night, staying with adults when trick or treating, and only visiting houses that have the lights on were among the important points.
In Mr. Kody's music classes, students learned Halloween-themed songs. Watch a video by clicking here or on the image below.

On Halloween, a little rain did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm of K-2 students. They paraded through the hallways, cafeteria, and gym for staff and visiting family and friends. Teachers also got into the Halloween spirit, especially The Spice Girls (below). As always, Physical Education teacher Carrie Spiegel led the parade.
Click here to view photos and videos from the parade.

Hagan Elementary School

At Hagan Elementary, students wore costumes for their class parties. Later, they participated in an anti-bullying activity led by Mrs. Shaffer. Students collaborated in groups and presented their collaborative artistic creations. Teachers also celebrated the holiday by dressing up as characters from Clue, Scooby Do, Junie B. Jones, and more. There were even some hippies. Principal Farrell was an upside-down man!
Todd Middle School

Todd got into the Halloween spirit with 80s rockers, an appearance from Elle Woods of "Legally Blonde," and other interesting characters.

Spackenkill High School

At the high school, students and teachers wore some outlandish costumes to school. Thanks to roving photographer Karen Baker for taking many of these photos (and also some at the middle school)! A musical performance in the lobby by Mrs. Kaczynski's students enhanced the mysterious mood.

Click here to view the full SHS album.
Winter Sports Registration

Online registration for winter sports is now open. Register on Family ID:
http://www.familyid.com/spackenkill-ufsd-athletics

The start dates for winter sports:
JV/Varsity - November 11th
Modified - November 18th

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.