Welcome to fall at BSCSD!

By Ken Slentz, Superintendent of Schools

Our recent homecoming events were a great reminder of the power of community, but also of the fact that fall is officially here and that school is well underway. As was the case last year, we have developed and the Board of Education has adopted a set of Areas of Focus and associated Priorities which guide our day-to-day as well as our long-term work towards accomplishing our district vision – that each student will attain a meaningful diploma which sets them on an excellent course for their plans after they graduate from Ballston Spa. Guided by education and learning research, our collective experience, and the knowledge of our students and their learning needs, we want to ensure that each of our students is able to read, write, think, and learn well, so that they can take advantage of every opportunity available to them. To continue to build the districtwide system which supports accomplishing our vision, we have been very busy over the last few months in our work, which includes:

- hiring over 40 new employees to fill vacancies left by retirees and new positions supported by the current year’s budget;
- reading our elementary counselors who will provide explicit instruction in helping our students manage their feelings, their ability to organize, their development of coping skills, etc., that may otherwise prove to be obstacles to their ability to focus on their learning;
- developing refined intervention teaching for when students are not responding to initial teaching and doing so in a way that gets them back on track as quickly as possible;
- implementing new literacy programs and courses which will strengthen our students’ abilities to read at or above grade level across a variety of content areas;
- offering additional interscholastic sports which provide more opportunities to more students; and
- gearing up for the start of the Phase 3 building project while continuing our focus on safe, secure, and welcoming schools.

And again, thanks to the support of the Board of Education and the community, these are but a handful of examples of the work that is underway.

As these initiatives have been happening, the financial auditors have been evaluating the work of Mr. Sirianni and his team in the business office, and I am very pleased to report that there were no findings and no recommendations from the auditors this year. This continues a long trend of positive audits for this team and the district. Now that the audits have been completed, we will begin the work of developing the 2020-21 school year budget which we will present to the community for a vote in May, 2020.

We continue to be grateful for the partnership of parents, caregivers, and the larger Ballston Spa school district community, and we look forward to continuing our work together to help each of our students realize the vision that we have set forth.

District Priorities for 2019-2020

Priority: Implement and provide ongoing professional learning for the adopted K-5 literacy curriculum; prepare to implement the adopted K-5 mathematics curriculum; and evaluate the Middle School literacy and math curriculums to ensure alignment with the NYS Standards, the newly adopted K-5 literacy and math curriculums, and to determine if adjustments are needed.

Priority: Develop and implement consistent instructional and behavioral interventions and protocols utilizing the Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework.

Priority: Determine and begin implementation of proven approaches to enhancing the social, emotional, and mental health and wellness of students and staff so as to maximize student learning opportunities.

Priority: Continue the special education program analysis to ensure that all students have access to the comprehensive curriculum and learning opportunities.

Priority: Ensure that the district has safe, secure, and welcoming/accessible facilities which support the teaching and learning processes.

Priority: Provide consistent, transparent, and purposeful internal and external communications.

Priority: Develop long-range strategic planning for the district’s instructional program.

A Meaningful Diploma For All Students

The Ballston Spa Central School District

Follow us on Twitter @BSCSD

Gordon Creek Elementary School 884-7270
Milton Terrace Elementary School 884-7210
Wood Road Elementary School 884-7290
Malta Avenue Elementary School 884-7250
Ballston Spa Middle School 884-7200
Ballston Spa High School 884-7150
Ballston Spa District Office 884-7195
Transportation Facility 884-7195

www.bscsd.org

Students return to BSCSD at start of the new school year

Malta Avenue Elementary students meeting School Resource Officer Lyons

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Malta Avenue Elementary students meeting School Resource Officer Lyons

Welcome to fall at BSCSD!
There is nothing more important in the academic life of a student than to be able to read well across a variety of topic and subject areas. Reading at (or above) grade level in particular allows a student to access, process, understand, and effectively utilize the information necessary to meet and hopefully exceed the expectations set for each year of their schooling. In other words, a student’s ability to read at or above grade level across content areas sits at the heart of their ability to learn and learn well. And beyond academic learning, which we as schools are charged first and foremost with developing, a student’s on-grade-level reading ability allows them to access both non-fiction and fiction writing that is of interest to them in general which allows them to not only build more knowledge about a variety of topics, but to experience great stories that may take them to far off lands where they meet new people, experience different cultures, empathize with characters who are experiencing a variety of challenges, and ultimately, become better individuals as a result. Reading is just that powerful.

Our highest priority then is to build a system across grades K-12 which provides each of our students every opportunity possible to learn to read and read well. As a reminder, we built a good deal of support for this system into the current year’s budget, including:

- investments in new literacy programs (reading and writing) at the elementary level which align to years of research on effective literacy instruction and development;
- the addition of two literacy coaches at the elementary level to assist principals and teachers in implementing the new programs and to provide ongoing training of teaching staff in effective literacy instruction;
- the development of intervention processes in which students who are struggling to meet grade level expectations can receive additional targeted instruction to get them back on track as effectively and efficiently as possible;
- the addition of two reading teachers at the Middle School who will implement this additional instruction;
- the introduction of a freshman literacy course at the High School to address reading deficits in our students so that they can get back on track with their learning; and
- ongoing training of administrators and instructional staff in effective literacy practices.

Further, to ensure that each of our students at each of our four elementary schools has a very similar experience in their literacy learning and to be as effective as possible with our most limited resource—time—we have also implemented a common schedule so that students have guaranteed access to consistent instructional time and opportunities to learn to read. As teachers become more familiar with the components of the new literacy program, we are confident that this will result in more time for additional opportunities to support our students’ learning.

Finally, we are in the beginning phases of an effort to build a community wide initiative that supports literacy in our schools, homes, and community and will have a lot more to report on this work as we go through the school year. Finally, as we did last year, we again ask for your help in reading to or with your child every day; to pose questions to them about what they are reading; to give them access to a variety of books, magazines, newspapers, etc., both at home and at our public libraries.

Should you have any questions on how you can help or about this work in our schools, please do not hesitate to contact your building principal.

Focus on Literacy at BSCSD

Ballston Spa Community Spirit Week

The Ballston Spa school community celebrated school and community pride during an annual Community Spirit Week, this year from October 7-12, 2019. The High School students planned several activities, including a Powderpuff game on Monday evening, a Pep Rally and Community Street Fair before the annual Friday night Homecoming football game and the annual fall dance on Saturday. Organizations from throughout the area and members of various school groups were invited to participate in the new Community Street Fair, which replaced the previously scheduled community spirit parade through the Village of Ballston Spa. Activities included a Rock Climbing Wall, Inflatable Obstacle Course, Dunk Tank, Swing Dancing, Photo Selfie Station, and a variety of fun games.
Students Recognized for Awards from Saratoga County Fair Exhibit

The district’s display of student artwork and projects received the First Place award in this year’s Showcase of Schools at the Saratoga County Fair. Additional awards were also given to individual students for their artwork and projects that were on display in the exhibit. The students and staff were recognized recently by the Superintendent and Board of Education and congratulated for producing another award winning display again this year.

This year’s individual students recognized for their work include Charlotte Skanes, Levi Jenkins, and Kristen Brandl from Malta Avenue Elementary School; Hannah Bentley from Milton Terrace Elementary School; Emily Hye from Wood Road Elementary School; Clara Pecunia from Gordon Creek Elementary School; Lauren Serencics, Peter Evans, Morgan Leggieri, and Caitlyn Dannelly from Ballston Spa High School; as well as Aidan Rosecrans and Abigail Stagl from Ballston Spa Middle School.

Please visit the district website at www.bsced.org and/or the Saratoga County Fair website at http://saratogacountyfair.org/ for more information.

High School Troupe Presents Mamma Mia!

The Ballston Spa High School Troupe will be switching things up this year and performing the musical Mamma Mia! as their Fall 2019 production. Performances will be at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday November 14, 15, and 16. There is also a matinee at 1:00 p.m on Saturday, November 16. All shows will be at Ballston Spa High School Auditorium, 220 Ballston Avenue.

ABBA’s hits tell the hilarious story of a young woman’s search for her birth father. This sunny and funny tale unfolds on a Greek island paradise. On the eve of her wedding, a daughter’s quest to discover the identity of her father brings three men from her mother’s past back to the island they last visited 20 years ago.

The story-telling magic of ABBA’s timeless songs propels this enchanting tale of love, laughter and friendship, creating an unforgettable show. An amazing cast and crew, non-stop laughs, and explosive dance numbers combine to make Mamma Mia! a guaranteed smash hit. A mother. A daughter. Three possible dads. And a trip down the aisle you’ll never forget!

The show is being presented through Music Theatre International (MTI). Tickets are available at the door, $12 for adults and $7 for students/seniors. Please contact the High School Office at 518-884-7150 for additional information.

Ballston Spa Students Receive Morley Literacy Award

Ballston Spa fifth grade students participated in the annual 5th Grade Moving-Up ceremonies at their elementary schools before the summer break. One student at each school was presented with the Maurice “Christopher” Morley Literacy Award. This award was created in Mr. Morley’s name and is awarded to four students moving up from the elementary schools in the Ballston Spa Central School District to the Middle School who have demonstrated exceptional determination and perseverance on the road to reading.

The award includes a certificate embossed with the Rotary seal along with a gift certificate to a local book store. The initiative honors the legacy of Village History Consultant Morley who was born in April of 1922 and how he struggled his entire life due to dyslexia. To his credit, Mr. Morley proudly donned a cap and gown to receive his Ballston Spa High School diploma some 60 years after his peers.

The 2019 award recipients include Candace Fuller from Milton Terrace Elementary School; Xander Vecere from Gordon Creek Elementary School; Mason Lang from Wood Road Elementary School, and Alexander Lopez from Malta Avenue Elementary School. The award is supported by the Rotary Club of Ballston Spa and presented annually by each elementary school principal.

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Robots in March 2020.

The Ballston Spa High School's FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) Team 3044, OxBe4, offered a LEGO Robotics Academy that was filled to capacity with 30 incoming 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students. Students worked with their peers in teams and learned how to construct as well as program robots utilizing LEGO EV3 kits. Participants also had the opportunity to start programming missions by using sensors and attachments.

Now that the school year has started the team will once again help organize and mentor the younger students and teams that participate in the FIRST LEGO League (FLL) and FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) competitions. Members of the FIRST Robotics Competition Team 3044 will share their experiences with robotics, help celebrate the release of the 2019 Robotics Challenges and help the students develop some strategies for the regional contests.

Ballston Spa students in grades 4-6 are eligible to participate on the FLL teams in their respective schools. Through the donations of corporate sponsors, the district will be fielding five FLL teams for the 2019-2020 season with Gordon Creek, Milton Terrace, and Wood Road schools each having a team and the Middle School having two teams. The FIRST LEGO League Competition integrates Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math to solve challenges. This year the challenge focuses on the theme of CITY SHAPE®. The team will need to find a creative way to traverse the field by designing a robot and writing programming code. In addition, the team will need to work as architects, civil engineers, structural engineers and environmental engineers to identify a problem with a building or public space in our community and design and share a solution to the problem. A Hudson Valley FLL qualifying tournament is scheduled for December 14, 2019 in the Ballston Spa Middle School.

The district also has two FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) teams which include a 7th & 8th grade team at the Middle School along with a group of students currently enrolled in a Robotics Class at the High School that will form a team to compete in the FTC competition. The 2019 challenge is SKYSTONE® presented by Qualcomm and they are already busy preparing for their competition in January.

FTC Team 3044 is also working with SEMI Organization to support a pilot project to scale up and bring robotics curriculum into 4th grade classrooms. They worked with 4th grade students at Wood Road Elementary School last spring as part of the project and plan to continue that pilot again this year. They are also working on resources to assist with scaling the pilot in other areas.

High School FTC teams from throughout the Capital Region and the Northeast will participate at Ballston Spa High School on October 26, 2019 in the annual Robot Rumble Off-Season Robotics Competition. Off-season competitions provide an opportunity for teams to have fun and to recruit new students, industry mentors and sponsors as they begin preparing for the Regional FRC Competition in March 2020.

Elementary Students Complete Robotics Academy

Ballston Spa students recently had the opportunity to participate in a week long LEGO Robotics Academy at the Ballston Spa High School. Members of the school's FIRST Robotics Competition Team 3044, OxBe4, offered the LEGO Robotics Academy as part of their efforts to get 4th, 5th and 6th grade students involved in STEM activities. The intent of the program is to expand the students' creative interests in LEGO building while also peaking their technological curiosity. Students worked with their peers in teams and learned how to construct as well as program robots utilizing LEGO Mindstorms kits.

The LEGO Robotics Academy, which is an annual fundraiser for Team 3044, provides an opportunity for the High School students to develop their communication and leadership skills as they work with the younger students. The week culminated with the students demonstrating what they learned for their parents and friends as they earned their EV3 Robotics License. Many of the students who attended the program will now apply the knowledge they learned this summer as they participate on FIRST LEGO League Robotics teams in the Ballston Spa schools.

FIRST Robotics has designed a pipeline of programs for school age students to help inspire them to be science and technology leaders, by engaging them in exciting mentor-based programs that build science, engineering, and technology skills, that inspire innovation, and that foster well-rounded life capabilities including self-confidence, communication, and leadership. Please visit the FIRST Robotics website directly at [www.usfirst.org](http://www.usfirst.org) for additional information.

Please check the Ballston Spa High School team website at [http://team3044.com](http://team3044.com) or follow the Twitter feed @ OxBe4 for more information. Please contact Ballston Spa K-12 Science Coordinator Diane Irwin at the Ballston Spa High School (884-7150) for additional information on robotics initiatives or by email at dirwin@bscsd.org.

Malta Avenue Elementary School’s Living History Encampment Day

On October 11, Malta Avenue students in second through fifth grades participated in the Living History Encampment Day. In collaboration with local professional historians, students had the opportunity to engage in multiple perspectives of the Revolutionary War through presentations using artifacts, re-enactments, storytelling and hands-on activities. Special thanks to our presenters: Kathryn Weller – New York State Museum Educator, presenting the roles of women camp followers in the British and American Armies

James Jenkins – New York State Museum Educator, assisting in presenting the British Military in the 18th century

Matthew Zembo, presenting the British Military in the 18th century

Anne Clothier and Rachel Clothier from Brookside Museum, presenting colonial games and weaving and textiles

Christopher Templin, presenting the Native American perspective, trapping and fur trade

Jean Hoins – Malta Avenue Elementary Teacher, presenting 18th century gardens - growing, gathering and storing food
Scotties BackPack Program Feeds Hungry Students

In collaboration with the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York, the district launched the Scotties BackPack Program in 2017 at Milton Terrace Elementary School and has now expanded to all four elementary schools. The program provides a bag of easy-to-prepare food to selected students each week to eat throughout the weekend. The program started with providing weekend meals to 30 students and the goal is to provide food for 175 students this school year. The cost to provide weekend meals for one student for the school year is $183. Revenue to support the program is raised by individual and corporate donations as well as through any available grant sources.

Brookside Museum, Ballston Spa Rotary, and Malta Sunrise Rotary recently joined together and sponsored a Chicken BBQ to benefit the Scotties BackPack Program. Through their efforts and contributions from many local businesses, they raised over $3,000 to donate to the program. They have also placed collection containers in businesses throughout the district. Please contact Ray Otten at 518-852-2642 for additional information on the community support efforts.

Other major contributors to the program have been Applied Materials, The Saratoga Hospital, Ballston Spa Elks Lodge #2619, and Global Foundries/Town of Malta Foundation. Individual and corporate sponsorships are always welcome! For a link to donate online visit https://www.bscsd.org/domain/28. Donations by check should be made payable to the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region or CFGCR and may be sent to:

Kelly Delaney-Elliott
BSCSD
70 Malta Ave.
Ballston Spa, NY 12020

Anyone interested in volunteering to support the BackPack program, please contact 518-884-7195 ext. 1369.

Ballston Spa Rotary Club Donates School Supplies

The Ballston Spa Rotary Club recently donated backpacks full of school supplies for students in the district after conducting their annual school supply drive. Principals and Social Workers throughout the district accepted the donations from Rotary members (shown in photo) and distributed the supplies to students in their respective schools.

Ballston Spa School Registration Office Relocated to BSHS

The Ballston Spa Central School District’s centralized student registration process will now be completed in the Guidance Office of the Ballston Spa High School at 220 Ballston Avenue in Ballston Spa. The Registration Office was relocated from the district Transportation Facility to facilitate the process in a more efficient and comprehensive manner. New students and families will meet with district registrar Mrs. Annelle Kavanagh to finalize the paperwork needed to enter and begin school in Ballston Spa.

After meeting with the registrar, secondary students will be able to visit their new school, work with the Guidance Office staff to determine class schedules and receive school specific information. The new student registration packet and additional information are available via the district’s website at https://www.bscsd.org/domain/49. Requests for an appointment to complete the registration process and specific questions may be directed to akavanagh@bscsd.org or call 518-602-0256.

Warm Your Heart with FROZEN JR.

Do you want to build a snowman? You’ll love this fanciful and heartwarming stage adaptation of the top-grossing animated film of all time! Join Anna (Brooke Cearley), Elsa (Fiona Hughes), and all of your favorite characters as they embark on an epic, ice-filled journey of self-discovery, camaraderie, and the real meaning of true love. Familiar roles of Kristoff (Jack Godden) and his sidekick Sven (Lily Bywater) along with their friend Olaf (Benjamin Ferrara) will also help to find out what Hans (Andrew Brooks) is really up to. Adapted for young performers, this musical includes favorite Frozen songs such as “Love Is An Open Door,” “Do You Want to Build a Snowman?,” and “Let It Go” as well as wonderful new songs from the Broadway production. With its empowering message of love and understanding, Frozen JR. is sure to melt your heart!

Disney’s Frozen JR. is playing at the Ballston Spa High School Auditorium this winter. The spectacular 60-minute musical, designed for middle school-aged performers, is based on the 2013 Disney film and the 2018 Broadway adaptation. The Launching Pad Production cast includes 60 students with a crew of 55 led by Producer and Director Joe Shaver, Music Director Laurie Huck, Choreographer Sarah Van Aernem, Scenery and Lighting Designer Pat Ferlo, Costume Designers Melissa Glaster and Dawn Nolan, and crew chief Tyler Russell.

Performances will be held on January 31, 2020 at 7:00, February 1 at 1:00 and 7:00, February 7 at 7:00 and February 8 at 1:00 and 7:00. Tickets, which may be purchased at the door up to 45 minutes before each performance, are $5 for students and senior citizens and $10 for adults. All audience members are encouraged to dress as their favorite Disney princess or character and stick around after the show for pictures with the cast. Refreshments and snacks will be available for purchase before the show and during intermission.

Disney’s Frozen JR. is presented through special arrangement with and all materials are provided by Music Theatre International. For more information about licensing Frozen JR. or other Disney shows, please visit www.DisneyMusicals.com.

Students Produce Saratoga County Sheriff Recruitment Video

Ballston Spa High School students recently produced a recruitment video for the Saratoga County Sheriff’s Office. Students in the Introduction to Video Production class led by Mr. Michael Fisher chose to create the recruitment video for the Sheriff’s Office as their culminating project. The film was edited into a final video (about 6 minutes long) and will be used widely by the Saratoga County Sheriff’s Office to promote the department (and recruit new officers). It premiered in August in the Malta Avenue Elementary School Auditorium and was shown throughout the NYS Fair in Syracuse. Congratulations to students John (Jack) Viers, Lukas Gibson, Zachary Washington, and Ian Griesemer.

Scottie’s Closet Offers FREE Clothing to Families

The Middle School will host a Scottie’s Closet on Saturday, November 2, 2019 from 9 am to 1 pm. This school community event provides free gently used clothing, books, coats, and shoes annually to about 300 students, families and individuals. It is organized by Middle School social workers Gaylen Wochowski and Christine Jones, along with numerous parent representatives, school and community volunteers.

The Ballston Spa Teachers’ Association will also provide FREE books to all of those in attendance. All of the items donated by the school community are provided free to students, families and members of the community. This annual community event would not be possible without the tireless efforts of school and community volunteers who donate, sort and merchandise all of the items in the cafeteria. Please contact the Middle School for additional information at 518-884-7200.
Supporting Students’ Athletic Interests and Developing Scholar-Athletes

David Sunkes, Athletic Director

Our athletics program at Ballston Spa Central School District is founded on the principle that the playing field is indeed an extension of the classroom and the athletic experience contributes to the growth of mind and body. The cornerstones of the “Scotties” tradition were laid generations ago by some of the community’s most respected student-athletes, many of whom continue to be involved in the athletic program as supportive parents and sports boosters. While the names change from year to year, the principles they embodied remain the same – dedication and desire, cooperation and compassion, and the importance of working collectively toward a common goal. These are just some of the ideals that echo across the Ballston Spa playing fields and gymnasiums.

Beginning in 2012-13, we made a commitment that students need to succeed in the classroom, be productive contributors to the school community and be dedicated to the athletic team they participate on. We also have recruited coaches who embody the team approach and the development of students as scholars first along with athletic success. Our coaches/advisors strive to provide a positive experience for students through quality instruction based upon personal and professional development. The athletic department will continuously challenge and encourage each student, individually and as a member of their team. Our goal is to provide both the opportunity and the experience for the student-athlete to compete in a competitive athletic environment. Sportmanship and fair play through team membership are key values learned through athletics. The student’s academic attention and focus should be reinforced and enhanced by athletic participation.

The Scottie dog became the Ballston Spa mascot in the 1960’s. It was in honor of William B. Scott, a longtime district teacher, coach and Athletic Director. His teams were referred to as “Scottie’s Boys,” so the Scottie dog became the logo that was utilized as the team mascot.

The Ballston Spa Scotties are privileged to have a great group of volunteers who have organized a Ballston Spa Athletics Hall of Fame. Please visit the Athletics Hall of Fame section on our website or the BS Athletics Hall of Fame’s website at www.ballstonspaathletichalloffame.com for more information.

Homecoming Game 2019

Ballston Spa Offers Community Swim Opportunities

The Aquatics Program is currently offering opportunities for public use of the pool during adult lap swimming sessions, from 6:00-7:00 am on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings and on Tuesday and Thursday evenings (times vary). A family/open swim is also offered on Saturday afternoons from 12:30-2:30 pm. The community swim program is open to district students, families and community members who pay a $1.00 entrance fee to utilize the pool. Additional opportunities are offered throughout the year, including Aqua Cardio classes, in partnership with the Saratoga YMCA. Information is available on the website by clicking on the aquatics/pool button on the left side of the homepage or contacting the pool office directly at 518-884-7150 ext. 2324.

Adult Sports and Fitness Opportunities

The Ballston Spa Community Education Program is currently offering two adult sports opportunities from 8:00-10:00 pm with Co-ed Indoor Soccer held on Mondays and Men’s Basketball on Wednesdays. The 10-week session began in September and requires a $30 fee for district residents. The popular Walk About program starts in October and provides a safe, indoor walking course for those interested in a low impact fitness activity. A $15 registration fee is required for this program and non-residents are charged $18 to participate. Walkers may join the program at any time. Pre-registration is required and fees are due at the beginning of each course. The programs continue throughout the year when school is in session. Those interested may register for courses by mail or in-person at the District Office, 70 Malta Avenue. Additional information regarding any of the courses offered is available online at www.bscsd.org or by calling 884-7195 ext. 1329.

www.bscsd.org
New School Year, New Staff at BSCSD
Pam Motier, Director of Human Resources

This past summer, the Ballston Spa Central School District welcomed over 40 new faculty and staff members to join in the ranks of professionals who are dedicated to serving our students in various roles and capacities. We opened our doors on September 3rd to new hires in most every department and in every school building in the district. Our new employees bring rich backgrounds in a variety of disciplines, as well as a wealth of experience from neighboring districts and states totaling 116 years. Our New Employee Orientation took place on August 19th wherein professionals had opportunities to meet administrators, teachers and other staff while acclimating to our buildings, systems, structures and surrounding community, as well as taking advantage of professional development opportunities.

The strength of our organization has always been our people. And as such, those who are new to us, coupled with our existing teams, will continue to foster the excellence that has made our district so highly respected for so many years.

Facilities Improvements During the Summer of 2019
Ed Martin, Coordinator of Facilities and Security

It was an active summer for improvements at the Ballston Spa Central School District. Our cleaning staff did an outstanding job this summer getting our classrooms and buildings ready for the return of students and staff. In addition to routine repairs, maintenance staff surveyed and performed preventive maintenance on school building roofs, air conditioners and kitchen coolers. Freshly painted areas include the High School cafeteria and library. New classroom furniture arrived for the east wing shared hallway of the Wood Road and Milton Terrace Elementary Schools, while new student desks were placed in the Middle School 400 wing classrooms.

An outdoor classroom was constructed behind the Gordon Creek Elementary School thanks to a Ballston Spa Education Foundation grant. Other outdoor work included the replacement of the Wood Road Elementary School playground equipment. Roadway projects included paving the gravel parking lot at the maintenance building, and replacing the grass and gravel strip behind the Wood Road Elementary School with paving. The Wood Road, Milton Terrace and Gordon Creek Elementary School parking lots and bus loops were maintained with scheduled crack filling, top coating and repainting.

In addition to internal building security enhancements, new building greeter stations are under construction at the Wood Road and Milton Terrace Elementary Schools, and we expect these to be fully operational in October. Additional facilities improvements that were included in the District’s Phase III Facilities Improvement Bond Referendum that was approved by the voters in October 2018 are at various stages of design and approval. Specifically, the proposed improvements include renovations in the Grove Street section of the Malta Avenue Elementary School as well as the outdated classrooms, bathrooms and locker rooms at the Ballston Spa Middle School. High School renovations include the replacement of the original cogeneration equipment and related control systems, upgrades to the auditorium and technology classroom access. The proposed athletic improvements include rehabilitation of fields in front of and behind the Middle School, the construction of a new multipurpose field on the south end of the campus and a new athletic storage building. These improvements will be completed as approved and scheduled in the coming months and/or during upcoming summer breaks.

Guidance Counselors Begin to Assist Elementary Students

Our four elementary schools are excited to welcome school counselors! Elementary counselors are educators trained in child development, learning strategies, self-management and social skills who understand and promote success for all students. They implement a school counseling program which provides education, prevention and intervention activities in the classroom and in small group settings that helps students acquire the attitude and skills they need in academic, career and social emotional development which serve as the foundation for future success.

Elementary counselors are an integral part of our school community who differ from our school social workers and psychologists as their focus is on teaching students the social emotional skills and behaviors they need to succeed in school and beyond. Counselors work with teachers and parents to support students with social emotional skills such as: self-awareness (understanding their own strengths and weaknesses and learning self-confidence), self-management (managing their own emotions and behaviors), social awareness (developing empathy), managing relationships (conflict resolution, teamwork, etc.) and responsible decision making. School counselors provide short term counseling with groups of students and individuals during times of transition, heightened stress, critical change or other situations impeding student success. They are not therapists and do not provide therapy or long term counseling in schools; however, they will assist families with finding the resources they need. Elementary parents should expect to receive introductory information from their school counselor.

BSMS Joins Together to Raise Alzheimer’s Awareness

The Ballston Spa Middle School Student Council and National Junior Honor Society recently joined together to spread Alzheimer’s awareness. Students and staff wore purple on a September Friday to show their BSMS pride and support this important cause. A group of students and staff also represented BSMS at the Walk to End Alzheimer’s at Siena College and in total the staff and students raised over $700.

Staff Members Honored for Contributions

The district recently recognized the Nursing Staff for making a significant positive contribution to the school community. Announced annually at the beginning of the school year, the Extra Mile awards program formally honors those staff members who exemplify the district’s core values of commitment and involvement. People are acknowledged based on several criteria, including those who act as a positive change agent, demonstrate leadership, motivate others in the pursuit of excellence, and/or develop creative and innovative solutions that have benefited members of the school community. Additional criteria include recognizing those who attain significant achievements that are recognized by the community and the people who create and demonstrate a belief and commitment to the district’s motto that Educating Everyone Takes Everyone.

District Partners Receive Special Recognition

The district presented an Extra Mile Award to three organizations for their support for students at the 2019 Back-To-School opening ceremonies. The district recognized the Ballston Spa Summer Lunch Program, the Saratoga County Sheriff’s Department and Applied Materials for providing for the basic needs of our students that allows them to succeed academically by removing the barriers of hunger and safety that affect many of our students.
Welcome to the 2019-20 School Year

Students and teachers returned to the classrooms in early September as the school year began. Over 4,100 students are busy learning in their new classes and getting involved in many academic and extracurricular activities throughout the district. Please read about some of the happenings in this newsletter, including information on district initiatives, community opportunities, student activities, and staff members. Additional information is always available on the school and district webpages, as well as the events calendar, so be sure to check for the latest details or call the school offices directly. Also, follow the district on Twitter @BSCSD or Instagram @BallstonSpaCSD for frequent updates and information.

Upcoming School/Community Events

OCTOBER
23 – Right Under Your Nose, High School Library, 6:00-7:15 pm
26 – Robot Rumble, High School Gym, 9:00 am-5:00 pm
30 – Mr. Ballstonian, High School Auditorium, 6:00 pm
30 – Halloween Concert, Community Band, Wood Road Cafetorium, 7:00 pm

NOVEMBER
2 – Scotties Closet, Middle School Cafeteria, 9:00 am-1:00 pm
6 – Malta Food Fest, TEC-SMART, 5:30 pm-7:00 pm
7 – High School Financial Aid FAFSA Workshop, High School Library, 6:30 pm
13 – Clean Tech ECHS Student Project Expo, TEC-SMART, 9:00 am
14 – Fall Troupe Production, Mamma Mia!, High School Auditorium, 1:00 & 7:00 pm
16 – Fall Troupe Production, Mamma Mia!, High School Auditorium, 1:00 & 7:00 pm
21 – High School World Language Lip Sync Night, High School Auditorium, 7:00 pm

DECEMBER
3 – 7th Grade Winter Concert, High School Auditorium, 7:00 pm
5 – High School Winter Concert, Wind Ensemble & Symphonic Orchestra, High School Auditorium, 7:30 pm
6 – Ballston Spa Holiday Parade, Village, 6:30 pm
9 – High School Winter Concert, Concert Band & Orchestra, High School Auditorium, 7:30 pm
10 – 8th Grade Winter Concert, High School Auditorium, 7:00 pm
12 – Milton Terrace Winter Concert, 7:00 pm
14 – LEGO Robotics, Middle School Gym, 9:00 am-3:00 pm
16 – 6th Grade Winter Concert, High School Auditorium, 7:00 pm
17 – Gordon Creek Winter Concert, 7:30 pm
19 – High School Winter Concert, Choirs & Jazz Bands, High School Auditorium, 7:30 pm
23 – January 3, Holiday Recess - classes resume January 6, 2020

Complete event information is located on the district website’s events calendar. All school specific events are listed on school sites and updated frequently. Please check often for the latest info, or call the appropriate school office. Also, follow the district on Twitter @BSCSD or Instagram @BallstonSpaCSD for frequent updates and information.