



Community Newsletter

Rush-Henrietta Central School District

Winter 2013

In This Issue...

R-H Teachers Serving as
MCC Faculty Fellows..... 2

District Website Made More
Accessible 2

Teachers Honored for
Outstanding Efforts..... 3

Rush-Henrietta Alumni Council
Hall of Fame to Welcome
New Members 4-5

R-H Embracing Dignity for All
Students Act 6

Students Recognized for
Excellence in Athletics and
Academics..... 7

Survey Results Show High Parent Satisfaction

We in the Rush-Henrietta Central School District are reviewing feedback from more than 2,000 responses during our recent parent survey. Parents continue to tell us they are experiencing high levels of satisfaction with the district and their child's school. We would like to share this good news with you.

1. More than **96 percent** of parents expressed satisfaction when asked if they received the information—such as class and transportation schedules—they needed from their child's school to get off to a good start this year.
2. More than **95 percent** of parents expressed satisfaction when asked if they have access to information about their child's classroom activities and assignments.
3. More than **94 percent** of parents expressed satisfaction when asked if they have access to resources to help their child with homework.
4. More than **94 percent** of parents expressed satisfaction when asked if they receive timely information about their child's academic progress.
5. More than **96 percent** of parents expressed satisfaction when asked if they have opportunities to conference with teachers and school staff members about their child's progress.
6. Exactly **88 percent** of parents expressed satisfaction when asked if they have received positive messages about their child from school staff.
7. Exactly **94 percent** of parents expressed satisfaction when asked if teachers and administrators respond to their questions and requests within a reasonable timeframe.
8. More than **94 percent** of parents expressed satisfaction when asked if they have opportunities to get involved in their child's school.
9. More than **92 percent** of parents expressed satisfaction when asked if the district's website offers useful parent information.
10. More than **95 percent** of parents expressed satisfaction when asked if they feel welcomed at their child's school.
11. More than **92 percent** of parents expressed satisfaction when asked if their child receives the help and support needed to meet academic expectations.
12. More than **92 percent** of parents expressed satisfaction when asked if their child's school is safe and orderly.
13. More than **95 percent** of parents expressed satisfaction when asked if their child feels cared about at school.
14. Exactly **85 percent** of parents expressed satisfaction when asked if their child's bus ride is safe and orderly.
15. More than **96 percent** of parents expressed satisfaction when asked if Rush-Henrietta buildings and facilities are well maintained and suitable for use.
16. More than **74 percent** of parents expressed satisfaction when asked if their child's counselor is accessible and responds to requests for information and assistance. (Only 5 percent said this needs improvement. The remaining 20 percent said "Don't Know.")

We are using the feedback you have provided to begin making improvements. On behalf of everyone in the Rush-Henrietta Central School District, we thank everyone who participated in our parent survey.



R-H Teachers Serving as MCC Faculty Fellows

We are excited that nine Rush-Henrietta Senior High School teachers are serving as members of the Faculty Fellows Program at Monroe Community College. As part of their work, they volunteered during the first semester to use new teaching techniques that research has proven to be effective in the classroom.

Their students have been learning the same content as their peers, but they may be doing it in new and different ways. The goal is to increase student engagement and to parallel college-level instruction in an effort to better prepare students for college success, while at the same time building a regional knowledge base that will support teaching excellence. The following teachers are participating in this project, which is funded by a federal grant:

- Bryan Coe is differentiating instruction and assessing impact on student achievement and content understanding in geometry and pre-calculus. He is providing pre-assessments and exit tickets to give students more specific instruction based on their own individual needs.
- Chuck Abell is working with representatives from the city school district and Monroe Community College to implement problem-based learning and assess its impact on reading and writing for students in grades 11-12 and college freshman studying English.

- Joe Bellanca and Scotty Linn are implementing Socratic Seminars in their history and English classes, and assessing how these seminars impact student writing. Students will engage themselves in student-driven discussion groups.

- Scott Nash is working with several Monroe Community College English teachers to implement a common assignment and assessment plan. He will determine the impact these common efforts have on both the high school and college students.

- Jillian Adams is using action research— in the form of group review sessions – in her math explorations classes, and assessing the impact on student participation in learning and increased understanding of math concepts.

- Ross Amstey and Mike Fantauzzo are working to create an online, problem-based learning project involving AP Language and AP Government students, and assessing the impact on student engagement and motivation.

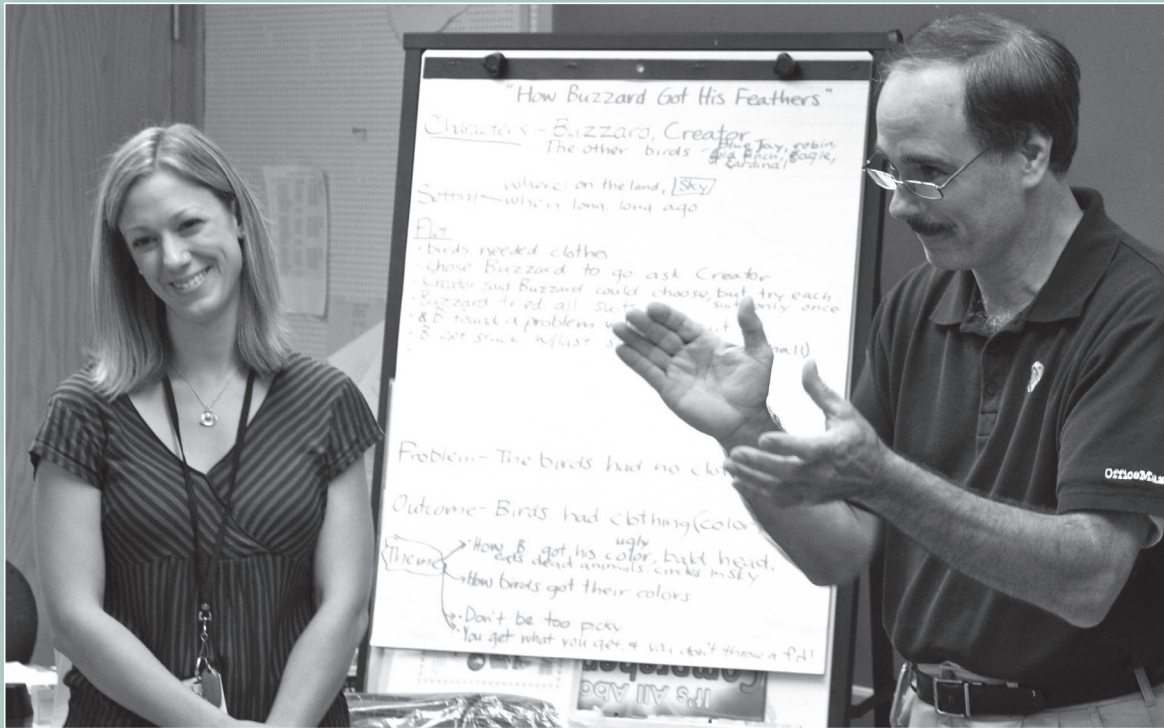
As part of this effort, students may be asked to take part in online learning, through blogs, Google Docs, or other avenues. Students also might be asked to complete surveys to gauge how they like these teaching methods. Our teachers will present the results of their first-semester efforts at a forum in the spring attended by representatives from regional high schools and colleges. Keep up the great work!

District Website Made More Accessible

Based on parent and community feedback, the Rush-Henrietta Central School District has removed Flash software from its district website. For many years, Flash was necessary for the website to function properly. Unfortunately, the software was incompatible with Apple products. This led to increasing frustration on the part of website visitors, especially as more people began accessing the site using mobile devices such as the iPad and iPhone. Flash recently became less

crucial as alternative software became available. With the exception of our home page video player, which still relies on Flash, the remainder of the website should be accessible via a wide variety of mobile devices. If you have questions, or experience technical difficulties while visiting the site, please contact us at www.rhnet.org/contact. Thank you for continuing to use the district website as a primary source of school information.

Teachers Honored for Outstanding Efforts



Kim Weeks smiles at her students as Ed Paffendorf, of OfficeMax, applauds her efforts.

Three Rush-Henrietta teachers have received noteworthy public recognition this school year after being nominated by a mixture of students, parents, and administrators.

Fyle Elementary School teacher **Kim Weeks** got a special delivery earlier this year from Southtown Plaza OfficeMax employees. The trio, led by store manager, Ed Paffendorf, came to surprise Mrs. Weeks with a national award and a box containing \$1,000 worth of supplies for her classroom.

The company's advocacy program, *A Day Made Better*, presented the award to the fourth grade teacher who was nominated by her school and principal for demonstrating passion, dedication and innovation in the classroom. "I feel like I'm in a dream," Mrs. Weeks said. "I'm so honored." After receiving a plaque commemorating the award and applause from her students, Mrs. Weeks invited her class to help her unpack the box and look through the new resources for their classroom, which included a new chair for her desk, a video camera and a laminator. The school also received boxes of supplies totaling more than \$2,000. Mrs. Weeks is truly a deserving teacher who doesn't seek attention or fanfare, yet is

one of those educators whose passion for teaching is evident in her day-to-day interactions with students, staff members, and parents.

In addition, **Christine Sargent**, a teacher at the Senior High School, was recognized during Premium Mortgage's area-wide Adopt-a-Teacher contest. Mrs. Sargent, who is well known as the director of the RH Singers, was nominated for the recognition by Lorelei Smith, a parent in the school district. As part of the honor, Mrs. Sargent was given a \$600 Visa gift card that she can spend on her classroom.

Finally, another teacher, **Antonio Selvaggio**, of Leary Elementary School, was honored with News 8's Golden Apple Award. He was nominated by one of his students, Dylan Lipp. Kevin Doran, who reported from scene, describes the teacher this way: "Dylan says the 'S' may stand for Selvaggio, but it could also be for Sincere, Super, or Spectacular! And Mr. S says that last one describes his career at Leary. He did his student teaching here, was hired and eleven years later is living a dream." You can watch the full Golden Apple report by visiting www.rhnet.org/goldenapple. Congratulations to all!



Rush-Henrietta Alumni Council Hall

Susan Moriarty Banker '74, Harry Bliss '82, Karyl Hurley '83, and Kimberly Pasch Arcoleo '73 will be welcomed into the Rush-Henrietta Alumni Council Hall of Fame on Saturday, Oct. 6, at the Senior High School. "We do this every year, and the quality of the Hall of Fame nominees makes it difficult to choose just a few," says Joe Bellanca, a member of the Class of 1965 who serves as president of the Rush-Henrietta Alumni Council.



Kimberly Pasch Arcoleo
Class of 1973

Kimberly Pasch Arcoleo, a member of the Rush-Henrietta High School Class of 1973, is associate professor and director of the Center for Promoting Health in Infants, Children, Adolescents & Women and associate professor of Pediatrics at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio. Her career focuses on several areas of maternal and child health, but for the past 15 years, she has been committed to ending health disparities among minority, poor and underserved children with asthma.

After graduating from SUNY Buffalo with a bachelor's degree in Biology, Dr. Arcoleo received a master's in Public Health and a Ph.D. in Health Services Research from the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, Department of Community and Preventative Medicine.

In her position as director of the Center for Promoting Health in Infants, Children, Adolescents & Women, Dr. Arcoleo promotes the highest levels of health and wellness. Through pioneering research, translational activities and transdisciplinary research educational programs, she hopes to change the health paradigm from one of treating illness to promoting health and preventing illness. She also trains and mentors undergraduate and graduate students and junior faculty, a role she finds fulfilling because she is able to prepare the next generation of researchers.

As associate professor of the College of Nursing at The Ohio State University, Dr. Arcoleo's interest in children extends beyond research to improving the clinical care they receive. To further this goal, she is partnering with Nationwide Children's Hospital to raise funds for a program that would provide the Columbus community with a mobile asthma clinic and potentially improve the health of more than 50,000 children.

Her vast experience and expertise in the field of scientific research has garnered Dr. Arcoleo numerous grants, awards, and recognitions, among them: Outstanding Researcher Award, Arizona State University President's Award, Who's Who in America 2009, Outstanding Faculty Colleague Award and Building Character with Grace Award.

She remembers her days at Rush-Henrietta fondly, and credits Mr. Ron Walker, her high school biology teacher, with inspiring her lifelong passion for research. She lives with her husband in Dublin, Ohio.



Susan Moriarty Banker
Class of 1974

Susan Moriarty Banker, a 1974 Rush-Henrietta graduate, is program coordinator at Pieters Family Life Center and a longtime community servant who developed her leadership skills as a parent and refined them years later as a member of the Board of Education.

The mother of three children, Mrs. Banker has been invested in our community for decades. She served as a Cub Scout den mother and committee member for Boy Scout Troop 334. In addition, she volunteered with the parent groups at Leary Elementary School, Roth Middle School, and the Senior High School. She helped shape the school district through her service as chair and vice chair of the District Parent Advisory Council and as a parent representative for the District Shared Decision Making Committee.

In keeping with her personal philosophy of giving back, Mrs. Banker continued to serve our community even after her children had graduated from high school. Between 1997 and 2012, she served five three-year terms on the Rush-Henrietta Central School District Board of Education. In addition, she took her leadership one step further and served multiple terms as president of the Board of Education.

During her tenure, she promoted the importance of continuing education for herself and her colleagues. In 2010, Rush-Henrietta was the only school board in the state where each member, including Mrs. Banker, earned Master of Boardsmanship awards. This is the highest honor from New York State School Board Association's Leadership Development Recognition Program. To qualify for the recognition, a board member must participate in many professional development events and activities.

Mrs. Banker works full-time as program coordinator for Pieters Family Life Center, a premier program of Heritage Christian Services, where she helps nurture relationships through recreational, educational, social, spiritual, health and wellness opportunities that are inclusive to all. She also served for 15 years as coordinator for the Henrietta Recreation Department gymnastics program, and was a National Youth Sports Coach and member of the USA Gymnastic Coaches Association.

Mrs. Banker and her husband, Alan, live in Rush.

of Fame to Welcome New Members

"Our 2012 Hall of Fame inductees represent a broad cross-section of professions, community service, and personal character. We are looking forward to welcoming them back to their alma mater, and into the Hall of Fame."

For more information about the Alumni Council, contact Joe Bellanca at cjbellanca@rochester.rr.com.



Harry Bliss
Class of 1982

Harry Bliss, a 1982 Rush-Henrietta graduate, is a celebrated author-illustrator whose creative works appeal to both children and adults. He is one of the most sought-after cartoonists in the world. His work has been described as "deceptively simple" and "for people who take their humor very seriously."

Mr. Bliss is an internationally syndicated cartoonist and cover artist for The New Yorker magazine, where he has contributed 18 covers and hundreds of cartoons since 1997. In addition, his self-titled single-panel cartoon, "Bliss," appears in newspapers throughout the United States, Canada, and Japan. "Harry Bliss is the real thing," declares Tribune Media Services, which distributes the cartoon for publication. "His New Yorker cartoons and covers have earned him loyal fans across the country."

So, too, have the many books that Mr. Bliss has illustrated for children. His first book, "A Fine, Fine School," by Sharon Creech, went on to become a New York Times bestseller. He also has illustrated popular books such as "Diary of a Worm," "Which Would You Rather Be?" and "Countdown to Kindergarten." He also illustrated "Mrs. Watson Wants Your Teeth," written by Alison McGhee, which was chosen by Child magazine as one of the best books of 2004. His latest book, "Bailey at the Museum," was released in September 2012.

Vermont Life magazine did a feature story about Mr. Bliss, examining his journey from self-described lonely teen to internationally known artist. The story quotes James Sturm, co-founder of the Center for Cartoon Studies. "Harry is wickedly funny, incredibly personable, and comfortable in a crowd," Sturm says. "He's kind of a throwback to the days of vaudeville, when cartoonists did performances, called Chalk Talks, and were men about town. Harry is also very self-deprecating. His wit is turned inward just as often. You get the idea that he almost needs humor to survive, which makes his work so much more urgent and important."

Growing up in Henrietta in a family of successful painters and illustrators, Mr. Bliss went on to study painting at The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and illustration at The University of the Arts and Syracuse University. He lives in Burlington, Vermont.



Karyl Hurley
Class of 1983

Dr. Karyl Hurley, a member of the Rush-Henrietta Class of 1983, is director of Global Scientific Affairs for Mars Petcare and an adjunct associate professor at both Cornell University and the University of Pennsylvania. She has devoted her entire professional career to understanding and promoting the health and welfare of companion animals.

After receiving a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from Cornell University, Dr. Hurley earned board certification from the European College of Veterinary Internal Medicine and the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine.

For the last five years Dr. Hurley has been working with the National Institutes of Health to fund research into the health benefits of pets to people: lowering blood pressure, providing emotional support and companionship for the elderly and utilizing therapeutic visits and working dogs to help the disabled, autistic and war veterans.

Having lectured and taught extensively in the United States and abroad, Dr. Hurley is highly regarded in her field and has an impressive list of writing credits, including contributions to veterinary science and medical textbooks and professional journals.

Dr. Hurley's devotion to animal wellness compels her to lend her considerable knowledge to professional organizations with the same focus. She is currently on the Board of Directors of the Society for Veterinary Medical Ethics and the Board of Advisors for the non-profit organization Green Chimneys, a worldwide leader in animal-assisted therapy and activities.

For more than two decades, Dr. Hurley has been involved in veterinary research activities. Most notable is her association with the WALTHAM Foundation, which is responsible for funding 100 projects in 19 countries to benefit the health and welfare of animals worldwide.

Dr. Hurley recognizes that the many opportunities she was provided in high school shaped the course of her life. She credits her biology teacher at R-H, Mr. Bob Patten, with inspiring her to pursue a career in science, and her French teacher, Madame Matthews-Desant for her lifelong love of art, travel and language.

She and her husband, Dr. Gail Smith, live in Downingtown, Pennsylvania, with their two dogs, two cats, and many fish.



R-H Embracing Dignity for All Students Act

Throughout New York, schools have been asked to implement the new Dignity for All Students Act, which took effect July 1, 2012. The goal is to create safe and supportive school climates where students can focus on learning, rather than the potential of discrimination, physical harassment, or verbal harassment.

The Dignity for All Students Act states that all students have a right to a safe, welcoming, considerate, and caring environment. Furthermore, school districts must work diligently to reduce and eliminate negative behaviors. Based on our district's successful Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports initiative, Rush-Henrietta is well positioned to respond to this law.

Our expectations for student conduct are reinforced by the Dignity for All Students Act, our Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) initiative, and the district's Code of Conduct. PBIS is an approach that focuses on responding positively to appropriate behavior. We also use lesson plans and positive acknowledgements to correct and prevent inappropriate behavior. With the help of our PBIS framework, each school uses disciplinary data to develop a system that helps determine which behaviors most inhibit our students' ability to feel comfortable in their school environment. In addition to our clearly articulated PBIS system, Rush-Henrietta has a Code of Conduct that emphasizes the importance of positive behavior and seeks to minimize negative behavior. We will continue to help our district comply with the Dignity for All Students Act by providing training opportunities to heighten awareness, working collaboratively with our schools and community to align our efforts in providing awareness and a safe, harassment-free environment, and offering educational opportunities.

We are training select staff members to become Dignity Act Coordinators throughout the district and taking appropriate steps to further enhance our school climate.



The new Dignity for All Students Act is intended to foster safe and supportive school climates.

We are pleased that we have in place a PBIS system that already supports the Dignity for All Students Act and we look forward to making it even more effective.

Having clearly defined expectations – and holding students accountable for them – is making a positive difference in our schools. Your continued involvement and support is crucial to our success. If you have any questions or we can be of any assistance, please contact the Department of Student and Family Services at (585) 359-5049.



Students Recognized for Excellence in Athletics and Academics

Many Rush-Henrietta athletes were recognized for excellence in the recently released All-Greater Rochester section of the Democrat and Chronicle. Mickey Burke, a member of the boys cross-country team, was the featured athlete and named All-Greater Rochester Runner of the Year. To read about Mickey and his achievements, visit www.rhnet.org/agr. In addition, Mike DeMay was named Coach of the Year for his work with the girls cross country team. The full list of students who were honored is as follows:

BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

Mickey Burke, First Team
Brennan Root, First Team
Mikey Schantz, First Team
Tyler Gerhardt, Honorable Mention
Mike Larkin, Honorable Mention
Patrick Shenal, Honorable Mention

GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

Alex Cooper, First Team
Emma Jones, First Team
Alana MacDonald, First Team
Siobhan Quinn, First Team
Kristina Glitch, Honorable Mention
Lexi Peters, Honorable Mention
Sammy Watson, Honorable Mention
Mike DeMay, Coach of the Year

BOYS SOCCER

Nour Hassan, Honorable Mention

BOYS VOLLEYBALL

Shaun Ermi, First Team
Matt Cardot, Honorable Mention

GIRLS SWIMMING

Megan Burns, First Team
Katie Burns, Honorable Mention
Rose Louk, Honorable Mention
Alicia Shenal, Honorable Mention

GIRLS TENNIS

Amanda McNelly, Honorable Mention
Skyler Kilmer, Honorable Mention

FOOTBALL

Bay Barley, First Team
Dan Drummond, First Team
Eliot Leubner, First Team
Chauncey Scisum, First Team
Chancellor Harris, Honorable Mention

In addition, the vast majority of our fall sports squads were named a Scholar Athlete Team by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association. For any team to be honored by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, a team must meet an association requirement that a certain number of athletes hold a grade point average at or above 90 percent. The number of students varies based on the size of a typical roster for that particular sport. For example, football, soccer, and track, which often have more students participating, must have at least 12 students who meet this qualification. Teams with smaller rosters, such as basketball, bowling, and volleyball, need fewer students meeting the criteria to earn the same designation. Congratulations to the Royal Comet students who play football, girls soccer, girls swimming, girls tennis, boys and girls volleyball, and boys and girls cross country for their outstanding work both on the field and in the classroom.



R-H Information is Only a Click Away!

Visit the district's redesigned website for comprehensive information about Rush-Henrietta schools. Also, consider subscribing to one of the district's latest services, E-News, which provides brief e-mail notifications, announcements, and reminders about important meetings, activities, and issues. Visit www.rhnet.org today!

Rush-Henrietta
Rush-Henrietta Central School District

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Join us at the Community Budget Forum!

**7 to 9 p.m., Thursday, March 21
Transportation and Operations Center
1133 Lehigh Station Road, Henrietta**

This is an opportunity to gain a better understanding of school district operations, the resources required to continue programs and services, revenue projections, and funding priorities. It is also an opportunity to learn about economic challenges and influences that impact budget development. Thank you for your continued interest in the Rush-Henrietta Central School District.