

SUPERINTENDENT'S BRIEF

Together, We are the Champions for Children in Poughkeepsie City School District

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Pre-K, kindergarten registration begins

Registration has begun for pre-K and kindergarten classes in the 2023-24 school year!

"Families will have multiple opportunities to register for pre-K or kindergarten with PCSD," Director of Elementary Education Janet Bisti said. "We are happy to have several Universal pre-K partners, which allows us to provide UPK for more Poughkeepsie children."

As a part of the Poughkeepsie City School District's effort with championing the academic preparation and lifelong success of the City of Poughkeepsie's earliest learners, registration dates are scheduled March 27-30, April 24-28 and May 22-25 from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. each day at Smith Early Learning Center, 372 Church St., Poughkeepsie. Students eligible for pre-K are born between Dec. 1, 2018 and Dec. 1, 2019.

Representatives from all UPK partners - Holy Trinity, Day One, and North Star Academy from the Boys & Girls Club of Poughkeepsie - will be present and families will be able to choose which program they'd like to enroll their child in. In addition to these options, parents registering students for pre-K or kindergarten at the ELC can apply for enrollment in our dual language program.

"Regardless of where your child is registered for PCSD's UPK program, rest assured that your child will receive a high quality education that will prepare them for kindergarten and their educational journey," Bisti said. PCSD's pre-K program "helps teach students the structure of school so when they enter kindergarten or first grade they are not overwhelmed." Prekindergarten is an important part of a child's education. Early intervention means a greater likelihood of success in later years. According to the [Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet Early Childhood report](#), "from prenatal development through a child's entry into kindergarten, the brain makes billions of connections between its neurons that set the foundation for learning for the rest of a child's life. Maximizing the opportunities to build a child's brain from the ages of 0 to 5 is critical to their lifelong learning, health and adult productivity."

Seating in the pre-K program is limited and will be done on a first-come, first-served basis. All kindergarten classes will be at the ELC where there's space for about 250 kindergarten students.

At the time of registration, parents will encounter an "One Stop Shop" environment where various community-based organizations will be present to share information that will support preschooler and school aged child development. Pre-K students will be screened using DIAL (Developmental Indicators for Assessment of Learning) to help identify the type of support a child might need in the areas of cognitive/basic concepts, language development, motor skills, self-help skills and social-emotional issues. This screening takes just 15-20 minutes.

To participate in a registration event, parents need to make an appointment with the [Central Registration online](#) or by calling 845-437-3480. Parents must bring their child and registration documents to their appointment.

Parents may complete and submit the paperwork ahead of time (documents are available in English, Spanish and many other languages on the [registration page](#) - just click the downward arrow and capital A for options) and email it to centreg@poughkeepsieschools.org or complete the documents when you arrive at your appointment.



Parents choosing the ELC can register students for the dual language program.



Registration is not complete and your child's place is not held until all required documents have been received. Residents may also pick up copies of the registration forms at Central Registration at 18 S Perry St. Questions? Please call our central registration office at 845-437-3480.

Parents needing help filling out the application can obtain assistance through the Parent Empowerment Center. Visit www.poughkeepsieschools.org/pec or call 845-451-4800 ext. 1425.



PHS counselor Franky Perez, valedictorian Amira Ibrahim and her mother, Leyla Chekou; Superintendent Dr. Eric Jay Rosser, salutatorian Kayla Hawkins and her mother, Karen; pose for a photo after the breakfast.

Breakfast honors PHS' top students

Nearly one hundred Poughkeepsie High School seniors maintained a grade point average of 80 or better since starting their high school studies four years ago. As an early celebratory kick-off of the success of PHS seniors, 99 students were recognized at the annual Senior Honor Breakfast at PHS Thursday morning with their families joining the celebration. Of those 99, 37 will join district and building leadership on the graduation stage in June for having maintained an average of 90 or better over their time at PHS.

"We have a very accomplished class," assistant principal Robert Parkes said. "They had one and a half years of not being here

because of COVID-19 and had to go through a lot to be successful. They missed 15 weeks of school as freshmen which is crucial to their development." Despite that, they persevered and showed their resilience, he said.

Student perseverance and resilience led to one of the highest numbers of students being honored for this achievement, Da'Ron Wilson, executive director of school engagement, said.

The celebration began with the PHS Color Guard presentation of the flag and Daniel Johnson, PHS senior singing the national anthem. Parkes welcomed everyone and introduced Dr. Eric Jay Rosser, superintendent of schools, who presented the students with words encouraging them to continue to take advantage of the opportunities that are placed before them as they have throughout high school. "Don't wait for opportunity. Be entrepreneurial and create it!" Rosser shared in discussing their journey beyond high school graduation. Noting that

"new opportunities will require an entrepreneurial commitment of self-initiative, patience, persistence, faith, hope, and a conviction that no matter what obstacle might appear between you and success, you will find a way to achieve the success you deserve".

Gabriella Fryer of the Community Foundations of Hudson Valley, Catherine Bryson, PPSTA scholarship representative, and Dr.



The PHS cafeteria was filled with PHS' top students and their families for the Senior Honor Breakfast Thursday, March 16, 2023.

Rosser shared various scholarship opportunities available to graduating seniors this year before Franky Perez, 12th grade school counselor, presented the students who have maintained an average of 90 or above in rank order.

At the top of the list of students were valedictorian Amira Ibrahim and salutatorian Kayla Hawkins. Ibrahim, received a [full-ride Questbridge Match Scholarship to Yale](#) where she plans to complete a degree in neuroscience. Hawkins has been accepted to University at Hartford but is awaiting other college decisions. She plans to major in psychology and wants to be a psychologist or forensic psychologist. Both will be honored at the Dutchess County BOCES Honor Breakfast on May 17, 2023.

Book study helps district leaders

Since late July, the central office team has been participating in a book study led by Dr. Eric J. Rosser. The book, "Change Management" by Jeff Hiatt, guides the reader to build their competency on leading and managing change in school buildings. Through targeted discussions about key topics, quotations, and ideas in the book, administrators engaged in not only developing a deeper understanding of what it means to initiate systemic change, but also in reflecting on the impact that change has had on school district stakeholders and how to manage the complicated nature of change.

The second book study, led by Greg Mott, assistant superintendent for elementary education, and the elementary department, focuses on building culture in school buildings, districts, and managing time. Their chosen book, "Leverage Leadership," provides practical strategies to build relationships, improve school culture and climate, and how to best leverage their time and resources to improve results. The Elementary Department has taken it a step further. Participants in the book study are not only reading the materials, but also engaging in active teaching and learning strategies that exemplify best practices in schools. For their first workshop on Thursday, March 2, participants interacted with one another in a Big Paper Talk activity, with a Google Slides Q & A session, and continued their discussion outside of the workshop on a Padlet.

By integrating these strategies into the book study, the elementary department hopes to model the types of activities that build culture and climate in and out of the classroom.



Central office staff engage in an activity around an element of the book, "Leverage Leadership," during one of the monthly sessions.



Clinton barbershop opens

A trio of local barbers spent an afternoon at Clinton Elementary School providing free haircuts to at least 30 young men who wanted one thanks to an idea from the school's PTA President Dahyah Casiano and Principal Dr. David Scott.

"My wife and I have kids of our own and it is difficult to get to a haircut," Casiano said. "Be it time or money, I thought why not have a barbershop at the school so kids can experience it and help the parents out."

Three barbers from local shops cut hair at Clinton Elementary School Wednesday, March 15, 2023. [SEE MORE PHOTOS ONLINE](#)



Emanuel Greene (Manno) from The Barber Haus NY, preps Logan Casiano for a haircut.

The idea took off, with Scott asking his barber, Jay Anglero who owns The Barber Haus NY, if he'd participate.

"Before COVID, I cut Dr. Scott's hair. My daughter went here and she was the first student body president for the school. I saw all the challenges he faced and thought any way I could help I would be happy to," Anglero said.

Anglero grew up in the Bronx, a similar environment to Poughkeepsie, and started his own business that is portable as he can bring his tools of the trade anywhere. He wants students to see possibilities.

"The way to a better Poughkeepsie is right here in the elementary schools. I want to change the area for the better," he said.

Fourth grader Domani Williams asked Anglero for a mohawk and was happy with the way it turned out. "It feels the same but I have less hair on my head," he said.

Anglero was joined by Emanuel Greene, known as Manno, also from The Barber Haus NY, and Leron Jenkins, known as Brooklyn, from Expressions Barbers.

Jenkins' sister works at the school and told him about the idea and he committed immediately.

"I'll probably be able to do about 10 haircuts in two hours," he said.

Greene's first customer of the day was Casiano's son, Logan, a second grader at Morse.

"I got a fade with my hair on top longer, he said. "It feels good." When Anglero told Greene about the event, Greene liked the

idea.

"I wanted to do something for the kids and know it is tough for parents to get out because many barbers are closed and this gives an opportunity for kids to get a haircut after school," he said, "Plus, I thought it would be really fun."

The classroom was decorated with a barber's pole, balloons, and signage - and a place for kids to have their photo taken afterward.

"We wanted to do something for our young men to help them look good and thus feel good," Scott said, adding that they stopped counting the number of haircuts after 30.

Casiano said the PTA's goal is to hold a barbershop event once a month, whether it is the same barbers or others who want to participate.



CI Weekly: Goal-setting, annotation help students

This week's Curriculum and Instruction Weekly discusses how goal-setting helps students take ownership of their work and this makes it more likely they will work through challenges. The Elevating Success article features tips on teaching annotation to students in a way that increases their natural curiosity. Plus, the Spotlight is on Wednesday's Pop

Concert. Learn more, [download CI Weekly for March 17, 2023](#).

Upcoming events

- **Saturday, March 18:** Saturday Morning Lights, 9 a.m.-12 p.m., Poughkeepsie Middle School, 55 College Ave.
- **Wednesday, March 22:** "10 Ways to Love Your Brain," 5-6 p.m., Parent Empowerment Center, 55 College Ave. Learn lifestyle habits that can help keep your brain healthy and possibly delay the onset of cognitive decline with representatives from the Alzheimer's Association.
- **Thursday, March 23:** "Goals and Bowls" nutrition workshop to help people understand realistic goal setting through community empowerment and networking. Two identical sessions: 9 a.m. at the Parent Empowerment Center, 55 College Ave. or 5 p.m. at Morse Elementary School, 101 Mansion St. Register by email with gcolon@poughkeepsieschools.org or call 845-451-4690 ext. 5304.