

SUPERINTENDENT'S BRIEF

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

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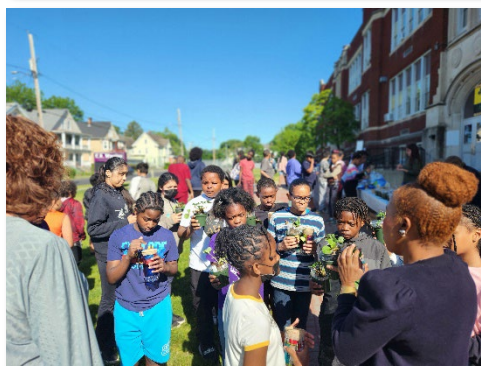
VOLUME 4



Warring helps city celebrate award



Perfect weather greeted Warring Elementary School students, staff and guests for a special tree planting in honor of the City of Poughkeepsie receiving a Tree City USA award for the 44th consecutive year Friday, May 26, 2023. City of Poughkeepsie Mayor Marc Nelson and Karen Williams, youth services director, wanted to have area youth participate in the celebration, so they reached out to Warring Elementary School. Warring students and staff were joined by Superintendent Dr. Eric Jay Rosser and Greg Mott, assistant superintendent of elementary education, to plant two trees. The tree and other plantings were donated by the City of Poughkeepsie and The Corn Crib Greenhouse. The event sponsor was Natures Impact.



Above, Superintendent Dr. Eric Jay Rosser helps students plant a tree at Warring Elementary School on May 26, 2023 after the City of Poughkeepsie was awarded a Tree City USA award for the 44th year. At left, students received strawberry plants to take home. Below, fifth graders pose with school, district and city staff.

Principal Nicole Penn said she was thankful Rosser chose Warring for the ceremony site and said it had a big impact on the school. "Students and staff learned a lot about the history of Poughkeepsie being a Tree City and it had a huge impact on the respect students have for trees and greenery in the surrounding community," Penn said. The tree planted is being treated as a gift from the fifth grade class and Penn has plans for it.



"We're going to turn it into an outdoor learning center so not only will they see it but we'll utilize that space." Members of the city's public works department and Arbor Day Celebration Committee (Lori Garcia, administrative assistant; Richard Distel, planner; Serena Marie Domingues of Natures Impact) helped plan the event and assisted at the event.

In addition to helping to plant, students received strawberry plants to take home and participated in a Touch a Truck event put on by the public works department.

Safe Routes committee launches

Planning has begun to develop safer walking and biking routes for children to travel to and from school under the Poughkeepsie City School District's Community Schools ICARE initiative. The goal is to launch the Safe Routes program by the start of school in September.

A small committee of staff and community members came together to plan for the Safe Routes (formerly Safe Passage) component of the initiative.

The Poughkeepsie City School District [ICARE initiative](#) is a community engagement strategy built upon an infrastructure of critical partners who support the academic, social, emotional and wellness needs of children within the district. The committee, comprised of Natasha Brown, executive director of community schools; Nedra Thompson, common council member 7th Ward; Diamond Mima, executive director of Charlia Frank; Whitney Humphrey, vice president of community programs at Family Services; Karen Zirbel, detective, City of Poughkeepsie Police Department; Sgt. Michael Lombard, City of Poughkeepsie Police Department; Damien Powell, assistant to the Mayor of Poughkeepsie; Ykim Anderson, SNUG coordinator, and Dr. Eric Jay Rosser, superintendent of schools, met to establish a vision for what a Safe Routes to Schools map could look like for the City of Poughkeepsie. See [City Schools of Decatur map](#) as an example.

Using the [National Center for Safe Routes to Schools](#) framework, the committee discussed what other community members should be included in the committee, data needed, timeline for implementation (September 2023) and next steps.

The National Safe Routes to School programs aim to make it safer for students to walk and bike to school to encourage more walking and biking where safety is not a barrier.



T-shirt marks class completion

An off-the-cuff comment by a student led AP calculus teacher Denise DiCarmine to provide them with a rewarding experience after taking their final exam.

"Many of them struggled but they stayed with it and I'm proud of them," DiCarmine said of the small class: Cristian Castellanos, Zae-la Douglas, Katia Estrada, Daniel Johnson, Gabrihana Jones, Josiah Riggins, Gil Sanchez, Malik Williams and Keenan Wood.

"One of them said, 'I wish we had a T-shirt that said, 'I survived AP calculus,'" DiCarmine said. It turns out, she is a member of the Poughkeepsie Underwear Factory PUF Studio (part of Hudson

River Housing) and knows the manager, Anita Fina Kiewra, who teaches printing there.

DiCarmine presented the students with an equation to solve to find the volume of a spinning top and worked with them to design the T-shirt.

While on the trip, students learned about printing and how to make screen-printed items and the costs involved, what Hudson River Housing does and found out about jobs and possible volunteer opportunities.

"It was a culminating party," DiCarmine said, adding that unfortunately one of the students was unable to attend the trip.

She purchased T-shirts for all the students.

At top, students pose with the T-shirt they designed. Left, Anita Fina Kiewra teaches a student how to squeegee a print.

