

# SUPERINTENDENT'S BRIEF

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

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## District celebrates, sets focus for 23-24

Today, June 30, 2023, marks the close of the 2022-2023 school year. My sincere gratitude to our entire Poughkeepsie City School District community, and vested stakeholders for our collaborative work in elevating opportunity and access to Poughkeepsie City School District students in and out of school. Your support, partnership, and contributions have yielded a successful year for our children.

There is much for us all to celebrate. Some highlights

include: Poughkeepsie High School graduating 174 students, of which more than 130 students from the Class of 2023 have been accepted into colleges across the country; the district's Community School model delivering high-quality parent and community engagement opportunities expanding student opportunities in and out of school; PCSD Arts Education investments resulting in phenomenal student performances and the creation of astonishing student art and art showcases; and the Strong Schools Equal Strong Communities Capital Improvement Project continuing to transform our schools to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century learning needs of our students.

While we achieved much success this year, we also had many opportunities to learn and grow. There continues to be a need for great activity and commitment to advancing the work of the [5-year Strategic Plan](#).

This summer, we will continue to serve our students with programming for students with exceptionalities, middle and high school students that struggled academically this year, and recreational and positive youth development programming through Community School strategic partnerships. The district's Strong Schools Equal Strong Communities Capital Improvement Project will be in high gear where more than \$20 million in capital improvements throughout the district are underway. District and school leadership also will be working hard to prepare for welcoming students and staff back in September.

Our collective areas of focus for the 2023-24 school year include updated performance objectives advancing the work of the 5-year Strategic Plan, focusing on student access and opportunities that yield student success for all students, maintaining a balanced budget to support the district's financial health and solvency, and strengthening our school, home and community approach to addressing the academic, social, emotional and wellness needs of students of all students in and out of the classroom.

On behalf of the Board of Education, I thank our staff, parents, strategic community partners, and vested community members for all that you have contributed to the success of Poughkeepsie City School District students. We appreciate you championing student success.

Yours in Education,  
Eric

## District program helps develop future leaders

Three Poughkeepsie City School District teachers took the next step in their career paths recently, presenting their capstone projects as part of the district's Aspiring Leadership Academy (ALA).

This year's participants: Pam Knittel, Christine Pizer and Andrea Boccio participated in 45 hours of workshop sessions planned and presented by Mariya Pushkantser and Janet Bisti, directors of secondary and elementary education respectively.

Established in 2021, the academy is designed to help aspiring leaders understand the core competencies and professional skills needed to serve as an effective building and central office leader. The goal is to strengthen the pipeline for effective leaders in the district. Topics covered included: leadership mindset, instructional leadership and vision, strategic thinking, recognizing great instruction and growing staff capacity, redefining school culture and climate, equity and cultural competency, disruptive leadership, implementer's mindset, legal matters and resource stewardship.

Each participant chose their own project based on their interests:

- Knittel focused on targeted needs of English as a New Language learners to ensure supports and protocols are in place for the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners screening and support for students once enrolled. Specifically, creation of an ENL Entrant Specialist and summer NYSITELL testing.
- Pizer developed a rubric to present to the curriculum committee for use in curriculum writing, which includes use of a template and process so that all PCSD employees would have access to the entire curriculum process from inception to board approval.
- Boccio ran a virtual professional development for teachers on how to integrate technology in the classroom using platforms including Nearpod, Google slides, Loom, Quizizz, Flocabulary and more.

According to Bisti, the curriculum committee has been involved in Pizer's work and will probably move forward with the more robust evaluation process for curriculum writing and easier access to the written work.

Congratulations to all of this year's participants.



**Aspiring Leadership Academy participants Andrea Boccio, Pam Knittel and Christine Pizer (L-R) hold their completion certificates after making their presentations. All are teachers in the district.**

## Library offers variety of summer programs, activities

The Poughkeepsie Public Library District (PPLD) recently published its information rich [July/August edition of "The Rotunda,"](#) a bimonthly publication offering descriptions and dates of programs and services accessible to the community that promote lifelong learning, literacy and reading.

A highlight of the July/August 2023 issue is a section on Oaxaca Week 2023 which starts July 25 and runs through Aug. 6. The publication notes that "Oaxaca is a land rich in tradition, folklore, music, food, color and friendly people who live their customs with intensity. Within the context of this celebration, we invite you to take part in our second Oaxaca Week, which will take place across the City of Poughkeepsie, with music, costumes, and food!" Events are highlighted in the publication.

This issue of "The Rotunda" also has an Adult Programming Survey that seeks input for planning services that respond to local community interests and needs (adult is defined as anyone 18 and older). The brief five-question survey ends with asking survey responders to share ideas for programs and classes that should be considered by the Library District.





The Rotyunda also provides a number of high-quality events and programs that are categorized in the following areas:

- Books, Writing, & More
- Arts & Entertainment
- History
- Health and Wellness
- Green Living
- Connecting (social events)
- Music for Everyone
- Public Computer Center
- Programs in Spanish
- Semana de Oaxaca 2023
- Teen Programming
- Early Childhood
- What's New for Summer Reading?
- Children

The Poughkeepsie City School District greatly values the PPLD and its role in Poughkeepsie in offering the community diverse services and programs resulting in an informed and educated public. Both organizations have collaborated to promote literacy and reading among pre-K- 12th grade students. Rover, the PPLD mobile library is frequently at PCSD Community School events and through an invaluable partnership, PCSD students and teachers have access to PPLD's Sora platform. Sora is a digital library that provides

students with grade, age and developmentally appropriate digital books in and out of the school environment. As a member of the Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet, the PPLD is a critical partner in creating and coordinating a cradle-to-career system of services, supports and opportunities that ensure every child can thrive in Poughkeepsie regardless of race, ethnicity, poverty or circumstance.

### Other newsletters:

- The [June 30, 2023, Poughkeepsie Pioneer Athletic and Wellness newsletter](#) offers information on fall sports being offered, registration, tryouts and physicals.
- [Puentes, June 30, 2023](#), edition, the district and city's Spanish newsletter.

