



Organizing for Greater Results

District reorganization would benefit students

Last evening, Dr. Eric Jay Rosser, superintendent of schools, presented a [plan](#) to reorganize central office functions that included realigning existing departments and central office work functions and creating new positions to amplify the Poughkeepsie City School District's efforts in increasing student performance and success in and beyond the K-12 continuum. The [plan](#), which does not increase the

total number of central office administrators, better positions PCSD to develop and sustain a systemic and focused approach toward increasing the district's impact on student learning and achievement and high level of attention and support to instructional staff. Dr. Rosser noted that the \$98 million Capital Project will transform all PCSD schools into 21st century learning environments and the district must place an emphasis on the instructional program to accomplish the mission of the district in programing high quality educational opportunities that prepare students to embark on individual paths of success in a globally diverse community.

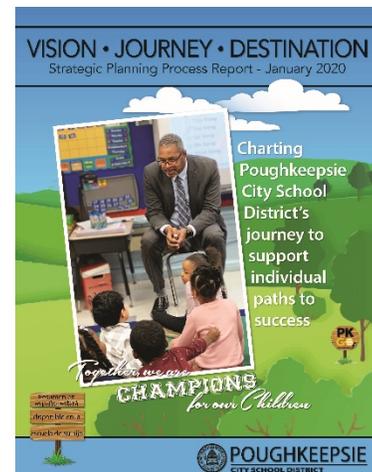
Realignment of the Offices of Student Exceptionalities and School Engagement under the Division of Administrative Services and Office of Community Schools under the Division of Instruction were the major shifts outlined in the plan. "The creation of the Office of College Readiness and Workforce Education will catapult student success in school and as intended beyond." said Rosser. "By having an office that focuses on identifying and creating opportunities for PCSD students to develop a college and career going mindset before entering high school where career and technical education opportunities and college preparedness activities are abound will change the trajectory of student success in Poughkeepsie." Additionally, the plan outlines the creation of a Director of Instruction and Professional Learning, who will plan, implement, supervise, coordinate and evaluate the K-12 instructional program and support developing the instructional capacity of teachers and building leaders through professional development and coaching support.

Superintendent contract extended

The Poughkeepsie City School District's Board of Education extended Superintendent Dr. Eric Jay Rosser's contract five years last night, ensuring stability and leadership at the district.

"This will allow this administration to see the five-year plan I presented to the board and community when I started through to completion and continue the work to transform our schools into 21st century learning centers," Rosser said.

The unanimous vote came without fanfare, though it was mentioned during board comments. Board member Thomas O'Neill called Rosser, "One of the best things to happen to this community in a long time," saying that he has "shown himself to be an exceptional servant through his commitment to the children of our community and a commitment to the community as a whole." Rosser's new term of employment will be for five years starting July 1, 2021, and ending June 30, 2026.





New position elevates elementary education

Janet Bisti's mission as Poughkeepsie City School District's new supervisor of elementary education is to ensure the district's youngest students receive a high quality education.

After all, if children are successful mastering reading and math basics at a young age, it will enhance their academics at the middle school and high school level.

"I'm looking forward to the enthusiasm I'll see on the students' faces when they are learning, reading and growing," she said two weeks into the job.

Already, the former Newburgh Enlarged City School District English teacher and instructional coach has started to develop training to help district teachers implement new curriculums being launched in the 2021-22 school year.

All district elementary schools will begin using the iReady diagnostic tool, Ready Reading, Ready Math and Voyager Passport.

- iReady helps teachers determine where students are at with regard to reading and math skills.
- Ready Reading and Ready Math deliver tailored instruction to students based on teacher input and results of the iReady assessments.
- Voyager Passport is a reading intervention program for early readers that delivers about 30 minutes of content per day to students

"My goal is to build teachers' capacity to deliver high quality instruction so we can increase student achievement and hit our goals," Bisti said. As part of her role, Bisti will pick curriculum and research what supports our teachers and students need. "I'm really excited to be in Poughkeepsie City School District because we are building something from the ground floor," she said.

Since much of her role involves supporting teachers - who are off for the summer - Bisti is working with building principals and assistant principals.

"They are the instructional leaders at their schools. We are working together so they know what the curriculum looks like and how to support their teachers," she said. "It is a team effort - I'm helping them to be as much an expert as the teachers are so that the teachers can turn to them."

In addition, Bisti is developing training that will be presented to teachers in September during conference days to give a boost to the training they've already received.

"I'm here to support the teachers so they can be confident and dive into the curriculum. I want them to be open and honest about what's working and what's not so I can give them support."

She is also working on developing content for the district website to help explain changes to the parents. Once the school year begins, Bisti won't spend as much time at the administrative offices. "I want to be there with the teachers - I'm a coach at heart," she said. Welcome to the team Janet.



Supervisor of Elementary Education Janet Bisti reviews books that are part of the new curriculums while sitting in her office.

Additional summer programming coming for students

Yesterday evening, the Board of Education authorized Dr. Eric Jay Rosser, superintendent of schools, to negotiate contracts with Boys and Girls Club of Newburgh, Rebuilding our Children and The Art Effect to provide Poughkeepsie City School District students with summer programming. As part of the district's efforts to engage community based organizations in partnering to address the needs of PCSD students under the Community School design, each program will provide students with academic enrichment, positive youth development, and wellness programming this summer.



Greg Mott, assistant superintendent of elementary education, noted that plans will be finalized and families who expressed interest in their child participating in summer programming will be contacted soon with enrollment and location details. Mott also shared that families who wanted home based learning materials for their children are currently picking up items (see next story for more detail) and the district's Extended Year Program and High School Summer Academy credit recovery program will start next week. Under the leadership of Ms. Natasha Cherry, executive director of Community Schools, the Summer Light's Program in the Park will kick off at Bartlett Park Aug. 2 for students in grades 1-5.



Above, family advocates Lorraine Bougton, Talent Davis and Christina Peterson hand out S.L.A.M. packets at the district administration building on South Pery Street. Top right, a close-up of the contents of a packet.

Instructional materials help prevent summer learning loss

Distribution of Summer Learning and Achievement Materials (S.L.A.M.) has begun in the district to help students who will not be attending in-person summer sessions stay up-to-speed on their skills.

Each bag contains five grade-appropriate books, a summer activity book and colored pencils. The books are aligned with the state curriculum.

"They are designed to bridge the summer and prevent learning loss," Assistant Superintendent for Elementary



Education Greg Mott said.

About 200 packets for each grade level were prepared based on parents who requested them via a district survey. The activity book features 10 weeks of daily reading and math assignments parents can work on with their children. "It keeps them involved and has lots of fun and engaging activities," Mott said.

Poughkeepsie High Veteran's Memorial Project underway

Efforts to obtain crucial information to ensure we include everyone who has served in the U.S. armed forces in a Veteran's Memorial Project being planned for Poughkeepsie High School have begun. The Poughkeepsie Veteran's Memorial Project is meant to commemorate, honor and inspire all Americans to remember our fallen fellow graduates of Poughkeepsie High School, each of whom sacrificed their lives for us and our country.

The memorial will include the following six wars and one category for veterans who lost their lives keeping our country free while serving in the military:

1. Civil War – 04/12/1861 - 04/09/1865
2. WWI -- 07/28/1914 - 11/11/1918
3. WWII -- 09/01/1939 - 09/02/1945
4. Korean War -- 06/25/1950 - 07/17/1953
5. Vietnam War- 11/01/1955 - 04/30/1975
6. Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Uzbekistan War
7. Veterans who lost their lives keeping our country free while serving in the military.

For PHS alumni to qualify to be included in this memorial, they or a relative or friend must submit a military DD214, and graduation diploma from Poughkeepsie High School. PHS alumni who are already contained in the PHS Veterans Memorial database can be accessed [here](#). If a person is missing from the list and should be included in the memorial, please send an email with the pertinent information to

pcsdprelations@poughkeepsieschools.org.

