



Morse Family Night stresses literacy



Parents, students and teachers enjoy Morse Elementary School's Family Night.

Over 310 participants attended Morse Elementary Fall Family Fun Night. The event's objective was to increase parent engagement, improve student achievement, and strengthen the culture of the school.

The school's Community Engagement Team created a fall-themed ELA night that provided

families with grade level Family Engagement Reading packets that contained multiple activities that parents and caregivers can use in supporting the development of their child's literacy skills. Each packet included an instructional guide in English and Spanish.

In classrooms crowded with parents and students, teachers modeled specific activities families can do at home to support their child's learning. The enjoyment was evident in the teachers' excitement while doing the activities within their grade level groups.

"We look forward to more experiences like this with our families in the future and we know that the Morse community is building in strength every day," shared Stephanie Green, third grade teacher and CET member.

To support family use of the Family Engagement packets, the school has devised a system where students who share photos of the family using their literacy engagement packet will get a chance to visit the Positive Behavioral Interventions Supports store for a reward.

"Family and school anticipation is now building as we await the big reveal of what's in the BIG ORANGE BOX located in our school cafeteria", shared Samantha Mitchell, principal. Recently, as part of the district's work to improve literacy, each elementary school received a "large package" to be used to support students' interest in reading and schools' PBIS programming ("large package" story to appear in future Brief).

City hires first director of youth services

City of Poughkeepsie Mayor Rob Rolison announced Monday that Karen Williams has been named Director of Youth Services. Williams is a human services and public administration professional with particular expertise in youth services. She is a former program supervisor for Hudson Valley Community Services, supervisor of the Dutchess One Stop: Level Up Dutchess Program, Case Manager for the Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce Workforce Connections and for Dutchess County Healthy Families.

Rolison said creating the position was key to the city's overall strategy, which has included teaming up with Poughkeepsie City School District's Superintendent Dr. Eric



Karen Williams is the City of Poughkeepsie's first director of youth services.



Jay Rosser to create a Children's Cabinet to bring together school districts, government agencies, child-serving community organizations and other local stakeholders to improve the lives of youth and families. The Cabinet was formed in recognition of the fact that children spend 80 percent of their time out of the classroom and in the broader community.

"Identifying Williams to serve in this capacity is a tremendous step in the City of Poughkeepsie and the Poughkeepsie City School District being able to collaboratively provide greater opportunity and access to our community's youngest members and learners." Rosser said. "Williams brings a great wealth of experience in human services and is passionate about championing the success of our community's youth. Her role serves as a critical piece to the City and school district's larger effort in connecting the community's youth with opportunities, supports, programs, and services beyond the structure of the school environment." She will be tasked with the analysis, development, promotion and coordination of programs related to the needs of local youth, and she will represent the municipality in matters concerning their protection and welfare. Williams will oversee the operations and management of the youth grant awards, in addition to seeking supplemental funding from other sources to help sustain and grow the program. She will also create and maintain a centralized directory of all youth services available in the area in such a way that the public can easily access information regarding available programs for eligible city youth. She also will serve as the liaison between the city, school district, Dutchess County and external stakeholders and nonprofit organizations, among other duties.

"I am looking forward to seeing the growth and changes, and how this position will evolve and benefit the City of Poughkeepsie youth in a positive, tremendous way," Williams said.



PCSD leadership and CTI Principal Nicholas Millas discuss Dutchess BOCES CTI programming.

BOCES CTI tour advances pathways efforts

Editor's note: Updated version reflects correct name of welding program.

In advance of the November Transformation Pathways Taskforce meeting, the Poughkeepsie City School District secondary education leadership team toured [Dutchess BOCES Career Technical Institute](#) to meet the new leadership of the school and determine which institute offerings are aligned to the career pathway data the Transformation Pathway Taskforce collected this past spring.

Dr. Charles Gallo, assistant superintendent for secondary education, led the team during a walkthrough observing classroom activities and asking Nicholas Millas, CTI principal,

many questions that address the career paths currently available. According to Millas, the Welding and Fabrication program is very popular based on employability and potential salary. The team previewed welding, cosmetology, automotive repair, film recording and editing, and the nursing program. The team came back with a higher understanding of program requirements and the student support services that BOCES provided to ensure student success.

Special Education Committee seeks parents

Last year the Department of Students with Exceptionalities established a Special Education Committee (SEC) of parents and educators of special education identified students with IEPs to advise district leadership on priorities in Special Education planning. Parent members identified last year are no longer available, so the department, led by Dr. Iris Goliger, executive director of the department of students with exceptionalities, is seeking interested parents to fill the three vacancies. Goliger's goal is to have a parent from elementary, middle and high school levels on the team.

Parents with a child who receives special education services can express interest in serving on the advisory committee [here](#). Requirements are that the family lives in the City of Poughkeepsie, have one or more children with an IEP, and that they can attend regularly scheduled SEC meetings throughout the school year (usually late afternoon or evening).

Parental Involvement



Department of Student with Exceptionalities