

RIDER REPORT

SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

March is by tradition a time of transition. We visualize it thundering in like a lion, all rage and bluster, and leaving like a lamb, softly and with the sense of renewal.



Ms. Guntlow

We look forward to warmer weather, the fresh air afforded by wide open windows, and spending more time outdoors. With this comes the hope of greatly reduced health risks for our entire community.

As this winter begins to wind down we are seeing so many signs of hope for a gentler Spring. With new developments around the state and throughout the county in terms of reduced infection rates and increased vaccinations, we are encouraged by signs that we may be starting to see the other side of the pandemic.

As Spring approaches, there are many bright spots for our students and families. We restarted sports and intramurals for our student athletes. Our Marching Band will return this Spring with exciting new uniforms. Our youngest Riders are kicking off an exciting new reading initiative. And with the updated CDC guidance offering some flexibility for schools, we are working hard to get students back into the classrooms more often.

There is an end we aspire to where all of our students are back in the classroom and enjoying our full offering of extracurricular activities once again. We are diligently monitoring for any updated guidance from the State Education Department and Department of Health and are focusing on hope for a brighter second half of the school year.

Reading Pals

Local authors, high school heroes, even grandmas, these are just a few of the reading rock stars students can expect to meet and greet this month (and next) as the Primary School kicks off its first Pick A Reading Partner (PARP) event to celebrate National Read Across America Day on March 2.

The month-and-a-half long reading initiative named “Color Your World With Books!” takes place from March 1 until April 12, and encourages families to read together for at least 20 minutes every day.

“We are so excited to start the program,” said Primary School Principal Andrea Williams, explaining PARP was made possible by a \$5,000 grant from the Evelyn Bordewick Charitable Fund for the purchase of materials for all 472 primary school students.

Students will receive a canvas bag with a logo, a book and bookmark, and a folder with a log to keep track of their reading.

“We are so grateful for the hard work of teacher Karen Vecellio and the committee that secured the funds and planned the six-week program.”

Since the reading event also kicks off around Spirit Week, Ms. Williams had a special surprise for the launch. “I’m going to go class by class dressed as a crayon box, and my assistants will be dressed as individual crayons to hand out the supplies.”



From left, Kelly Hodges, Andrea Williams and Crystal First pose for a photo in their costumes for the Color Your World With Books program at the Primary School.

The organizing committee has also made plans for an initial read-along live-broadcast with Katherine Gardner, a teacher at the school and published author, who will read from her book “Ollie and Scout, The Cat’s Meow.”

“We have made plans for surprise mystery readers to appear every night on live online,” said Ms. Williams adding that high school librarian, Jennifer Two-Axe, has also helped organize high school seniors who will volunteer as virtual reading partners.

“We hope to make this an annual program at the Primary School,” said Ms. Williams.

Budget Talks Enter Preliminary Stage

The 2021-22 budget is currently in the process of being created. The first of seven public presentations began in December leading up to the vote on May 18. Past presentations can be found [here](#) at the district website.

Throughout the budget process multiple stakeholders, such as students, staff, department chairs and grade level leaders, principals, budget committee members, Board of Education members and the public are invited and encouraged to provide input and

feedback. In January, New York State released its preliminary budget, including the district’s allocation. Overall, the initial estimate is nearly flat with an increase of 0.79% or \$124,620. The district anticipates receiving the final aid amounts in early April once the State budget has been approved. At that time, the final draft of the budget will be presented to the Board of Education for their approval prior to the May 18 budget vote by district residents. For important calendar dates, visit the Ichabod website [here](#).



Kelly Firmbach photo

Riders won their game against Watervliet Cannoneers, 47-37 in their first game of the season.

GAME ON!

Ichabod Crane Sports Network (on YouTube) came out of hiatus last month to give spectators a way to see games as the winter season resumes. You can subscribe to the channel [here](#). In its first livestream of the 2021 season,

The Riders bested the Watervliet Cannoneers at the non-conference home opener on Feb. 20, by a score of 43-37. To learn more about sports enrollment, click [here](#).

MARCHING ORDERS

The sample uniforms used to size our Marching Band/Color Guard students recently arrived and they look amazing!

The new uniforms will replace ones that have served the school for 40 years. The cost of the uniforms and their redesign is generously supported by the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, The Bank of Greene County, and the district.



Gifts of Gratitude

Last month our teachers, staff and students were overwhelmed by the generosity of our neighbors, who saw their good work and wanted to reward it. A local business that asked to remain anonymous generously donated 50 Chromebooks to the school community.



IT Staff Len Bates displays one of the new devices.

Gifts of Self

Catharine Cloud Kennedy never attended Ichabod schools herself, nor does she have children who were students here. However her neighbors - English teacher Katie and history teacher Randy Goold - impressed her, and she wanted to do something to show her appreciation.

"Everyone who is dealing with COVID certainly needs a pat on the back," said Mrs. Kennedy. "I am a big proponent of saying Thank You."

To that end, Mrs. Kennedy has given the school more than 80 pieces of pottery made



Catharine Cloud Kennedy, above, stands with some of the pottery pieces she's created for Ichabod teachers and staff.

in her home studio as a thank-you to teachers and staff.

Mrs. Goold said she was touched by her neighbor's generosity and talent. "What I love about Cloud is her thought for others and her thoughts for bringing creativity into other's lives. Living next door I see her going to her workshop and I wonder what she is creating. As a teacher, that quality of wanting to create and make and then share that experience with others is something so cool and something I could only hope that my students develop in their own lives."

Presents and Provisions

To acknowledge all the teachers and the hard work they are doing for students, Verizon and Robert Hoyt of the Hudson/Greenport Verizon TCC store, sent a surprise package filled with treats to say thank you. He has two kids at Ichabod.

HS Music/Band Teacher Awarded \$2,500 Grant

Ichabod Crane High School Band/ Marching Band Director, Jennifer Edwards was chosen as a "New York State Farm Teacher Assist" grant recipient for innovative teaching methods during the pandemic.

Out of 200 submissions statewide, Mrs. Edwards was one of only 40 selected for the \$2,500 award.

The funds will be used to purchase 21 guitars for the band, expanding the number of instruments students can play while wearing masks.



Mrs. Edwards was recognized by New York State Farm Assist for innovative teaching methods. She is pictured with Abby Trinkle - Grade 10.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

MARCH

March 2, Board of Education meeting, 7 p.m. at the Primary School. The public is encouraged to attend via Zoom.

March 5, Second Trimester ends.

March 12, Registration Deadline - ACT Exam, High School.

FOR MORE NEWS VISIT OUR WEBSITE



www.ichabodcrane.org

March 13, SAT Exam, High School.

March 24, Early Dismissal, K-5 7:30-11:20 a.m.

March 31, Local Scholarship Applications for seniors due in HS Counseling Office