

# Sheveron Communicator

Fall 2020 Edition

## *In This Issue*

The 70<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Commencement



Class of 2020  
Graduates



VVS "Stay Safe - Stay  
Open" Plan



Genesis Group Teacher  
Appreciation Winners



Essential Employee  
Recognition

Vernon Verona Sherrill  
Central School District



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Verona, New York 13478



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[www.vvsschools.org](http://www.vvsschools.org)



[Facebook.com/VVSDistrict](https://www.facebook.com/VVSDistrict)



[@WeAreVVS](https://twitter.com/WeAreVVS)

## Superintendent's Message

I hope this back-to-school issue of the Sheveron Communicator finds you and your loved ones well and rested. The return to school for the 2020-2021 school year will be the most challenging school opening any of us have experienced. We are charged with a feat never before undertaken by educators, parents or students; and for which there is no playbook, no guide, no prior experience to draw upon. We are trailblazers, authors of our story.

Over the summer, our administrators, faculty, and staff worked tirelessly around the clock to prepare for a reopening that aligns with the varying needs of the VVS community. There is no easy answer; no one-size-fits all solution that can address the complexity of this situation. We appreciate and empathize with the difficult decisions our families are facing - balancing the health needs of children and family members with social-emotional needs, educational needs, and childcare issues is no easy task.

In the spring, the entire VVS community demonstrated its care and compassion by helping neighbors, providing for those less fortunate, and assisting those in need. We know that the VVS community will continue to work together as we face the challenge of returning to school during a pandemic. We are blessed to live in a community that donates their time, talent, and treasure to help others. We are fortunate to live, work, and learn with people who genuinely care for their fellow community members.

This issue of the Sheveron Communicator highlights the tremendous effort of our students, families, faculty, staff, and community members to stay connected and lift up our community during the first months of the pandemic. We found countless ways to celebrate, to comfort, and to come together. From over a thousand volunteer hours, to more than fifty thousand hours of virtual connections, to over one hundred thousand meals delivered, the VVS community has risen to the challenge time and time again. This fall will be no different.

In difficult times, we see true character emerge. I'm humbled by the depth of character displayed by our students, families, faculty, staff, and community members. I'm proud of all we have accomplished and how willing we are to go further to do what is best for our children. I'm grateful for the tireless work of all who continue to demonstrate why VVS is a great place to learn, to work, and to live. I have every confidence that we will face the coming challenges with grace, with perseverance, with positivity, and - most importantly - together, as a community of distinction.

With gratitude,

Martha Group, Superintendent

## Back-to-School Information

**First Day of School:** A staggered in-person return to school will take place beginning Tuesday, September 8<sup>th</sup>. Please look for information from your child's building for specific information for your child's return to school.

**Enrollment:** Currently we are offering online registration for new students entering the VVS Central School District. Please visit the school website at [www.vvsschools.org](http://www.vvsschools.org), select the school that your child will be attending, click on the registration link, and complete the online registration forms. Additional documentation will be needed at a later date.

**Immunizations:** Students must be fully immunized in order to attend school. For information on immunization clinics, call the Oneida County Health Dept. at 315-798-5747 or Madison County Health Dept. at 315-366-2361.

**Projected Enrollment** – 1,875

**Employees** – 355 (Administrators, Teachers, Civil Service)

### School Lunch Prices:

Elementary K-6	\$2.00
Secondary 7-12	\$2.25
Breakfast	\$1.00
Milk (white and flavored)	\$.50

### Emergency School Closings or Delays:

The following radio and television stations will carry emergency closings or delay information:

Radio	Television
WSYR: Syracuse	WKTV: Channel 2 Utica
WIBX: Utica	WSTM: Channel 3 Syracuse
	WTVH: Channel 5 Syracuse
	WIXT: Channel 9 Syracuse
	Spectrum News: Channel 10 Syr.

### VVS High School 315-829-7446

Mrs. Erin Sanchez, Principal • Mrs. Brandie Collins, Assistant Principal

Principal's Secretary	Mrs. Jill Collins
Assistant Principal's Secretary	Mrs. Robyn Coufal
School Counselors	Mrs. Karen Holton, Mrs. Adrienne Murphy, Mr. Kristofer Sullivan
Career Center	Mrs. Karen McDonough
Guidance Office Secretary	Mrs. Leah Kiser
School pictures: September 22 <sup>nd</sup> & 23 <sup>rd</sup> (Retakes October 14 <sup>th</sup> )	

### VVS Middle School 315-829-7444

Mrs. Carrie Hodkinson, Principal

Secretary	Mrs. Heather Bauer
School Counselor	Ms. Lucianna Kapps
Guidance Secretary	Mrs. Christine Breckenridge
School pictures: October 8 <sup>th</sup> (Retakes November 12 <sup>th</sup> )	

### E.A. McAllister Elementary School

Mrs. Elisabeth Relyea, Principal

315-829-7330

Secretary	Ms. Katherine DeJesus
Clerk	Mrs. Jill Evans
School pictures: September 24 <sup>th</sup> (Retakes October 29 <sup>th</sup> )	

### J.D. George Elementary School

Mr. Gary Bissailon, Principal

315-829-7360

Secretary	Mrs. Jacqueline Cole
Clerk	Ms. Jessica Jones
School pictures: September 30 <sup>th</sup> (Retakes November 4 <sup>th</sup> )	

### W.A. Wettel Elementary School

Mr. Vince Pompo, Principal

315-829-7300

Secretary	Mrs. Tracy Killian
Clerk	Mrs. Julie Snediker
School pictures: September 25 <sup>th</sup> (Retakes November 2 <sup>nd</sup> )	

## VVS District

# Family & Community Communications

Now more than ever, it's important for us to stay connected. VVS offers several great ways for both families and community members to stay in touch and access the most recent information and updates.



### Peachjar Digital Flyers

To enroll: Email  
swhalen@vvschools.org



### District Website

Visit us at  
www.vvschools.org



### District Facebook Page

Like and follow us at  
Facebook.com/VVSDistrict

## VVS High School

# Congratulations to Our Top Graduates!

### Autumn Davis, Valedictorian



Having completed numerous AP and Honors courses, Autumn, the daughter of James and Jeanine McDonough, achieved Valedictorian of her graduating class in hopes of becoming a future Pediatric Neurosurgeon. Alongside a magnitude of extra-curriculars, some of which she partook leadership roles including Interact Club, National Honor Society, and Mathematics, Autumn became the highest-ranking student in her martial arts school by acquiring black-belt under the ZDK National Organization, "from the ground up." While she expresses her passion for karate by attending various tournaments and teaching classes to those in the community, Autumn also displays a myriad of talents for music. Autumn continued to expand her musical abilities, after playing violin for over four years in orchestra, by vocally partaking in NYSSMA, All-State, and All-County Festivals. During her free time, she loves to give back to the community by volunteering at local hospitals and blood banks, along with tutoring children in different subjects. She will attend the University of Rochester in the fall to hopefully dual or triple major in biochemistry, neuroscience, or a related field, as a continuation of her love for science combined with research.

### Olivia Furman, Salutatorian



Olivia's high school career was truly the best time of her life so far. Through twelve seasons of cross country, indoor and outdoor track, and involvement in Interact Club and International Club, she has discovered herself and her interests. Olivia is active in her church and community, and has taken on several leadership positions such as Co-Captain of her track teams and President of International Club. Olivia will attend SUNY Brockport in the fall to pursue her interest in Spanish, while also studying either political science or education. She would like to thank her teachers, coaches and parents, John and Lauren Furman, for their encouragement and advice throughout the last four years.

### Class of 2020 Top Ten (in alphabetical order):

Nathan Angell  
Lauren Bennati  
Abbygail Coston  
Nathaniel Dam  
Autumn Davis  
Olivia Furman  
McKayla Jenkins  
Katelyn Litwak  
Bailey Simmons  
Brian Snyder

# VVS High School Celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> Commencement Ceremony

The VVS Class of 2020 enjoyed the most unique graduation in the history of the VVS Central School District! Changing state guidelines gave us the opportunity to celebrate our seniors twice with graduation festivities. The first graduation took place the week of June 8<sup>th</sup>. Each senior was honored individually in front of their family with a personalized graduation ceremony. Then, on Friday, June 26<sup>th</sup>, VVS celebrated its 70th commencement ceremony at Sheveron Stadium. This ceremony was the first evening graduation, and only graduates were in attendance due to state restrictions on gathering size. One hundred and forty-one graduates were presented with diplomas, many of which exceeded New York State graduation requirements. Congratulations to our graduates and their families!



## Congratulations to the Class of 2020 Our Graduates Are Going Places!

Charles M. Abel	Employment
Gabrielle M. Adams	Paul Smith's College
Jack R. Adams	MVCC
Alexis M. Aguilera	MVCC
Ryan M. Alsheimer	College Undecided
Nathan E. Angell	Vanderbilt University
Lexus R. Avery	Utica College
Kameron T. Babcock	Air National Guard
John S. Baker	Employment
Traionna N. Barber	Cazenovia College
Brayden D. Bechtel	Employment
Corrine L. Benjamin	SUNY Orange
Lauren M. Bennati	SUNY Geneseo
Alyssa N. Bitz	Utica College
Sean M. Bleaking	Syracuse University
Sophia L. Breckenridge	MVCC
Delaney L. Brewer	SUNY Geneseo
Clayton T. Brown	Undecided
Keturah H. Brunje	Onondaga Comm. College

Christopher C. Bui	LeMoyne
Gavin M. Cacciotti	Employment
Aislinn E. Carey-Nestle	MVCC
Kramer M. Carney	Air Force
Joshua L. Casey	Employment
Nicolina M. Castronovo	Queens University
Darin L. Champney	Undecided
Rachel G. Champney	SUNY Morrisville
Rachel A. Collins	MVCC
Rebecca L. Collins	SUNY Broome Comm. College
Kyle J. Compoli	Employment
Jacob A. Conley	Undecided
Rebekah M. Conley	Undecided
Alexis M. Costello	Air Force or MVCC
Abbygail L. Coston	MVCC
Brandon Coufal	Employment
Nathaniel J. Dam	RIT
Ryan J. Dam	MVCC



Autumn S. Davis	University of Rochester	Gavin L. Miller	St. John Fisher
Dylan M. DePaul	MVCC	James P. Miller	MVCC
Brandon Dishman	Undecided	Tasia M. Millson	OCC
Jewel L. Dupont	Undecided	Lucas S. Musacchio	Temple Univeristy
Kaleb Erdige	Onondaga Comm. College	Tate K. Myers	Employment
Konnor G. Erdige	SUNY Delhi	Andrew G. Nasci	Undecided
Andrew D. Fox	Lineman Training Center	Abigail E. Nell	MVCC
Aaron J. French	SUNY Morrisville	Veronika S. Nelson	LeMoyne
Olivia G. Furman	SUNY Brockport	Benjamin L. O'Brien	MVCC
Daniele K. Garcia	Air National Guard	Aurelia M. Omilanowicz	BOCES - Adult Continuing Ed. Program
Ayla E. Genei	MVCC/OCC	Matthew B. Palmer	Military
Alexander S. Gilmour	University at Buffalo	Ashley M. Parkhurst	SUNY Polytechnic Institute
Jaymes A. Gowans	Employment	Brianna L. Perry	MVCC
Garrett M. Gregory	Undecided	Ian R. Perry	Undecided
Emily R. Hall	Russell Sage College	Sebastian Powers	US Navy
Jade A. Hall	Undecided	Isabella V. Quackenbush	MVCC
Matthew T. Hilliker	MVCC	Samantha L. Randall	Employment
Carley A. Hinman	MVCC	Caleb A. Randel-Spells	Undecided
Kyle L. Holeck	SUNY Oneonta	Celine Rappe	Employment/College
Trinity L. Hugunine	Employment	Trevir A. Relyea	MVCC
Olivia G. Hunt	Undecided	Collin J. Roberts	SUNY Alfred
Kacie L. Hyle	MVCC	Gabrielle E. Roberts	Cazenovia College
Bailey P. Janowski	LeMoyne	Hailey A. Rose	St. John Fisher
McKayla C. Jenkins	Nazareth College	Andrew R. Rotach	Employment
Maggie Jewell	BOCES - Adult Continuing Ed. Cosmetology	Hannah E. Salo	MVCC
Seth J. Jones	Marines	Makenna J. Seitz	SUNY Cobleskill
Sophie L. Jones	MVCC	Connor E. Silvis	SUNY Adirondack
Benjamin Keenan	SUNY Fredonia	Bailey P. Simmons	Utica College
Matthew L. Kroll	SUNY Cobleskill	Brian D. Snyder	SUNY Binghamton
Gavan A. Lamach	Employment	Susan M. Stevens	MVCC
Sarah E. Lanz	MVCC	Eric A. Surprenant	RIT
Lucas F. Laribee	MVCC	Troy E. Sutherland	Gap Year, then MVCC
Justin A. Lazarek	Employment	Colten J. Terrier	Undecided
Mikayla M. Lewis	SUNY Fredonia	Zachary P. Thompson	MVCC
Katelyn E. Litwak	SUNY Oneonta	Joseph E. Vanderhoof	Shear Ego International
Danann K. Lohr	SUNY Morrisville	Spencer R. Walker	MVCC
Jayne R. Lohr	MVCC	Kiera L. Warne	Niagara University
Abrielle L. Lopitz	CNA	Halee M. West	Undecided
Garrett M. Lowery	BOCES - Adult Continuing Ed. Heavy Equipment	Phoenix J. Weydig	MVCC
Michael S. Lubeck	MVCC	Marshall M. Wier	MVCC
Rylee M. Marcellus	North Carolina State University	Danielle N. Wiley	MVCC
Alexander L. Mastro	Siena College	Shaun M. Williams	MVCC
Alexis R. Mathis	BOCES - Nursing Program	Taylor R. Williams	LeMoyne
Hunter A. McCombie	Undecided	Abigail L. Wittmann	SUNY Cortland
Emma R. Miller	Jefferson County Comm. College	Jadyn M. Wong	OCC
		Lora G. Woodcock-Silliman	MVCC
		Brayden T. Yauger	MVCC

## VVS High School

# Keep Learning, Stay Connected, Take Charge!

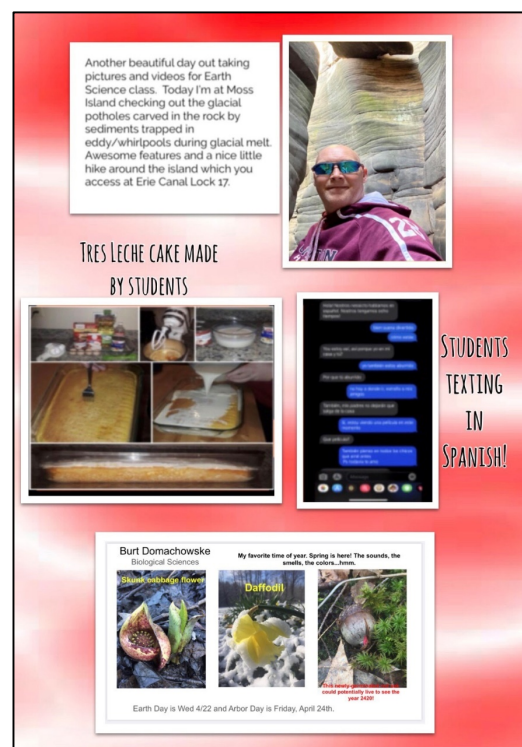
Although the 2019-20 school year brought many unexpected challenges, we are very thankful for the way our school community came together during this unique situation. As we reflect, it is clear that there is much to be proud of!

## #KeepLearning

As we shifted to remote learning, our faculty and staff found ways to keep online instruction both engaging and relevant for our students. In the high school, teachers shared best practices in a Google digital scrapbook. This allowed our faculty members to stay connected to each other while also learning about the great things their colleagues were implementing!

For instance, Mr. Carr traveled around Central New York (social distancing of course) and took videos for use in Earth Science classes. These virtual field trips connected students directly with the content they were learning in a way that is not always possible during a regular school day. Mr. Domachowske also took many pictures of the blooming spring vegetation to share with science classes.

Señora Viggiano used a real-world “choice board” to keep students using their target language in a relevant manner. Students could choose a task to complete such as watching a movie in Spanish, following a Spanish recipe, texting in Spanish, or changing their phone settings to Spanish.



## #StayConnected

While learning occurred outside of the school building, it was our mission to maintain a positive connection with our students and our school community. In order for students to start their day with an inspirational message and a familiar face, the high school began creating and producing daily “Morning Greetings.” These Morning Greetings were shared on the high school social media platforms (Facebook and Instagram) as well as on the guidance grade-level Google Classrooms.

Over the course of ten weeks, 48 Morning Greeting videos were shared with our students and the community. These videos featured members of our faculty/staff and also included special guests, such as Tom Murphy from Sweethearts & Heroes and VVS alumnus Staff Sergeant Matthew Stamp. The highlight of these Morning Greetings were the videos which featured our very own VVS high school students! Nine students accepted the challenge of creating and sharing a Morning Greeting message, and we are proud of and impressed by their ability to inspire their peers and our entire community.

## #TakeCharge

While learning remotely from their homes, we knew that students would have to shift into the driver's seat of their education. This required them to reflect upon and improve their self-management skills, such as time-management, goal-setting, and self-discipline. It was our goal to support students as they refined these valuable skills and to also acknowledge their achievements. Prior to remote learning, our teachers filled out "Student Shout-Outs" which were displayed in the high school lobby. This positive practice was shifted during remote learning by partnering with the Red Zone School Store to mail 56 students a personalized Shout-Out from a teacher along with a small gift card to a local business for an ice cream treat! We are proud of the way all our students used this challenging time as an opportunity for growth.

As we look toward the 2020-21 school year, we are committed to emphasizing quality instruction and student learning, maintaining and building upon the connections within our school community, and continuing to provide opportunities and support in order to empower students to take ownership of their educational goals. Whether we are learning remotely, in-person, or a combination of both, these goals continue to be our focus. We will build on the many positives that came out of remote learning and create an environment where all students can be successful.



## VVS Camp Invention

# Elevating and Innovating at Home

This summer **Camp Invention** was very different, but thanks to the innovative spirit of the national non-profit organization *Invent Now*, they designed a Camp Invention Kit to meet the safety challenges due to Covid-19. VVS had 269 elementary and middle school students participate in our **Elevate at Home Camp Invention!** Campers could choose to be totally self-directed as they worked on their inventions independently or decide at any time to use the support videos located on the Camp Invention website. Family members of all ages could join in the self-paced design challenges as well. Some of the highlights of the kits were:

**Flight Lab** - Campers experimented with the principles of flight such as lift and drag as they investigated the inner working of their high-tech simulation robot.

**Champions** - Campers designed and built the ultimate sports complex and followed directions to add simple machines into the games in their sports complex.

**Design Thinking** - Campers learned about intellectual property rights as they became entrepreneurs as they sketched designs, built prototypes, designed logos, and pitched their products.

**Rescue Squad** - Campers became environmental experts as they designed and created an energy efficient LED plant, created parachutes to safely airdrop beavers, and worked to restore the balance of nature in the environment.



We hope you will take some time to enjoy a few of our photos from **Elevate at Home** on the VVS Homepage!



## VVS Middle School

# Remaining Focused on Relationships

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During the 2019-2020 school year, the middle school continued to build and maintain relationships with every student. This goal was accomplished through multiple measures including, but not limited to, team building activities, lunch groups, after-school activities and clubs, and Capturing Kids Hearts practices. With the unexpected arrival of COVID-19 and its unique set of challenges, our goal remained the same, however, our course of action changed.

As the VVS community learned to navigate life during the pandemic, one thing that prevailed was the unwavering care and support for our students. We remained committed to the proven traditions that boost student morale. The middle school ensured that connections were not only maintained but strengthened in a time when it was easy to let them subside. Teachers were up for the challenge and got creative in interactions with students. Students were provided with opportunities to connect with staff through scheduled Google Meets, office hours, phone calls, texts, and emails. In addition, we strived to maintain school-day norms by providing daily announcements that included themes of the week, positive motivational statements, and pertinent information for students and families. Finally, students were recognized for their hard work through "All-Stars of the Week" in which students received a personalized yard sign delivered by our very own middle school faculty and staff.

Although the 6th Grade Track Meet required modification, our incoming 7th graders were still able to make connections prior to September. The middle school facilitated a virtual transition event, which consisted of positive peer interaction and team-building activities. Incoming 7th graders were also invited to a "Drive-by Party." As students and families drove through, they were greeted by enthusiastic faculty and staff, had their picture taken in our drive-by photo booth, and received a Class of 2026 t-shirt. Thanks to the efforts of our VVS community, faculty, and staff, relationship building was a success!



## Health and Wellness Day

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On February 12th, VVS Middle School hosted its annual Health and Wellness Day that enlists the support of numerous community members and faculty members to present on a variety of topics involving self-care, "hot topics," and physical fitness. This year's goal was to provide students with a choice in their attended sessions. Every student was able to participate in at least one fitness session, two self-care sessions, and two "hot topic" sessions. In addition to individually chosen sessions, all students attended a presentation by Mr. Marc Mero, Former WWE Wrestling Champion and Author of "How to be the Happiest Person on the Planet." Mr. Mero's message inspired and empowered students by encouraging them to make positive choices, cherish relationships, and realize and achieve their dreams. The overall consensus was that students were enlightened and thoroughly enjoyed all of the presentations.



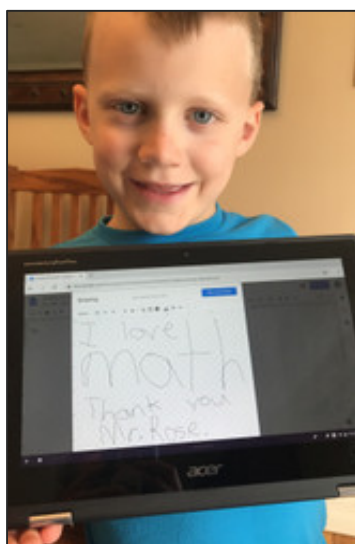


## E.A. McAllister Elementary

# Building Bonds and Celebrating Success!

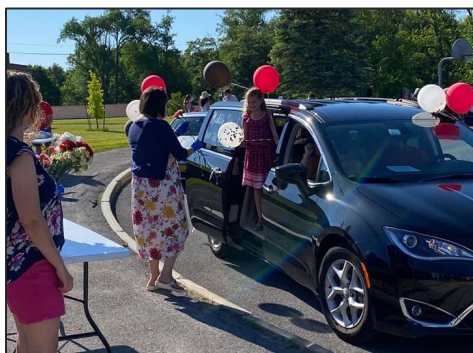
The bonds that are formed throughout the years between students and teachers are very special – especially after completing a two-year loop. When tasked with how to finish a non-traditional school year, it was important to be able to celebrate all that our students, teachers, and families have accomplished under tremendous pressure.

Mrs. Jeffery decided that the best way to close out the school year was to have a picnic with each of her students! After careful planning, she was able to coordinate individual time with families. It is unclear who had more fun – Mrs. Jeffery or her second grade students! We applaud the dedication of everyone who worked hard to remain connected to each other. Every teacher concluded the year in their own special way.



Mr. Rose has a knack for making math fun! As our Math AIS teacher, he makes the most of every moment of the instructional day, engaging students in learning from the moment they step into his presence to the moment they leave him. This dedication has translated into his work through remote learning. He goes out of his way to meet with students and provide fun and interactive lessons from behind a computer screen. His technology innovation has engaged a multitude of students during this challenging time of not being able to meet with our students one-on-one.

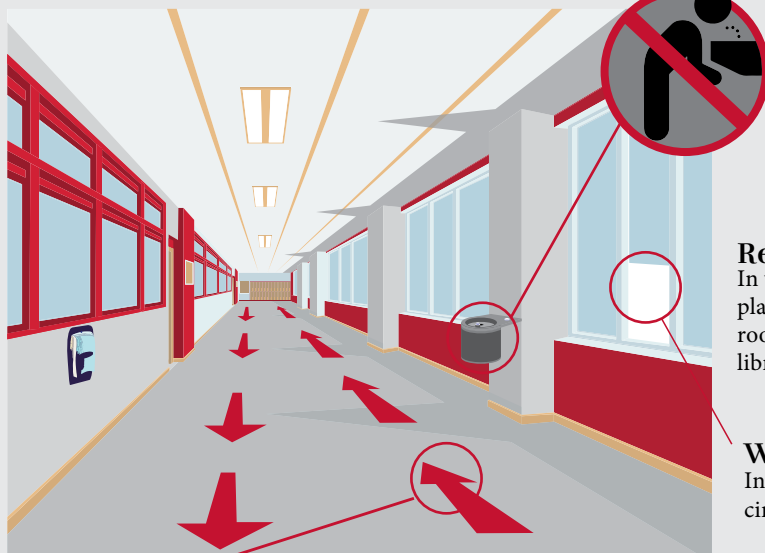
The end of year celebrations for our Kindergarten and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students looked quite different this year – as did most things! The students were recognized for their accomplishments via drive through ceremony and a parade that followed. We were amazed at the creativity that the families displayed as they decorated their vehicles and continued on the parade route. A very special thank you goes out to everyone who helped make this a success: The Sherrill-Kenwood Fire Department, Sherrill Police Department, Sherrill PTSO, McAllister Faculty and Staff, and all of the community members that lined the streets to make our graduates feel special!







# STAY SAFE to STAY OPEN



## Drinking Stations

Drinking fountains will be replaced with a combination of bottle filling stations or water bottle/disposable cup stations throughout the schools.

## Additional Mitigation Measures

Including virtual field trips, limited visitors, and no large assemblies.

## Reduce Congregation

In various areas such as: cafeterias, playgrounds, main offices, health rooms and the use of lockers, libraries, and restrooms.

## Outdoor Spaces

Utilized for learning and recreation where appropriate and feasible, including the use of playgrounds. Cleaning and disinfecting of outdoor spaces will follow NYS DOH, CDC, and NYSED guidelines.

## Windows & Doors

Increase fresh air circulation when feasible.

## Controlled Traffic Patterns

Reduction of bi-directional foot traffic in hallways and stairwells, including signage and distance markers where practical and appropriate.

## Increased Staffing

Additional nursing and custodial positions have been added to assist with increased health and cleaning/sanitization needs.

## Isolation Rooms

Available for individuals who may be displaying symptoms while awaiting pickup.

## School Buses

Facial masks required to be worn at all times and social distancing maintained to the greatest extent practicable. Staggered runs to reduce capacity and controlled release with multiple school entry points employed to reduce congregation.

## Multiple Entry Points

Where feasible to reduce bottlenecks.

## Face Coverings

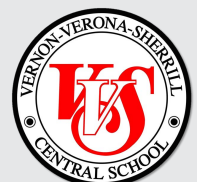
Face masks are required. Accommodations will be made, with proper medical documentation. Specific ways in which face coverings and partitions will be used in schools, individual classrooms or with individual students and grade levels, including developmental and medical feasibility, will continue to be explored and articulated.

## Plexiglass Partitions

At main offices and district offices.

Visit our website: [www.vvsschools.org](http://www.vvsschools.org)

Reopening Plan • FAQ • Town Hall Information • Instructional Videos





## J.D. George Elementary

# Recognizing and Celebrating our Achievements!

Although many of the traditional end-of year events had to be modified, the faculty, staff, and PTO at J.D. George found ways to send all of our students off in style! The 2019-2020 school year was a challenge for our district and families, but we found creative ways to celebrate the successes of our students and recognize them for their achievements and accomplishments.

### 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation

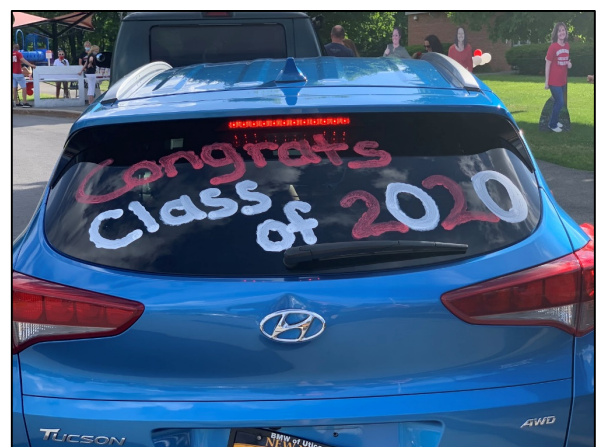
The staff at J.D. George, along with support from the PTO, put on a drive-through graduation event that captured a wonderful end to each of our sixth grade student's elementary careers. The graduation drive-through was followed up the next week with a J.D. George 6<sup>th</sup> grade graduation video. Featuring memories of students throughout the years, the video included pictures and moments with friends, teachers, and staff during the time they spent at J.D. George. The video, which each family received access to, included shout-outs from past and current teachers as well as announcements for students who earned one of our annual awards. The highlight of the video was a series of fun pictures from the drive-through graduation event filled with smiles, tears, and a feeling of accomplishment.

Without a doubt, this was a memorable year for these students and their families! The JDG staff wishes our 6<sup>th</sup> grade 2020 graduates the very best as they head off to the middle school next year!

### J.D. George Annual Awards Ceremony

The 2019-2020 year ended with some students being recognized for their great work in several areas. Students in grades PreK-6 were commended for their hard work, achievements, and perseverance during the school year. The annual awards ceremony, which could not take place this year, was accomplished by video. Many teachers and the building principal took time to create a video showcasing the various awards that students had the opportunity to earn. Teachers gave a short presentation explaining the award and what it took to earn it, and then proceeded to announce the winners of the awards at the various grade levels.

The award-winning students were showcased and then presented with a certificate to capture the significance of their outstanding work this year. The video was shared with families of the award winners to view. A sample of these awards included the Pexton Oral English Award, Mary Fisher-Knapp Memorial Award, and the Art and Physical Education awards. Congratulations to all of this year's award recipients!



W.A. Wettel Elementary

## Sustaining Community While Apart

How does a school remain together while apart during remote learning? For most schools, including W.A. Wettel Elementary, we purposely sought a way during this challenging time to not only have continuity in learning but, just as importantly, to sustain continuity of community. In a recent *Education Gadfly* (<https://bit.ly/3aZe7Or>) dated April 24, 2020, Daniel Parsons reinforces this idea: “Distance learning requires us to be humans in an inhuman situation. We can’t simply provide lessons and assessments; we have to bridge this digital gap and carry some sense of humor and goodwill and community through the cold wiring. If we’ve succeeded in even a modicum of that task, we owe that to the success in the months prior when we created something special. A school family. A community that could rely on itself, that could flourish even in isolation.” Maintaining and building upon the strong bond between home and school, easing fears brought on by this crisis, and bringing some smiles to our students and families were major priorities as we forged ahead with remote learning. One way we solidified community between home and school was through our partnered themed-weeks.

The conceptualization of themed-weeks typically began with our “Fun Committee,” made up of teachers and the principal, who met every week virtually and determined the theme of the following week in advance. We then shared the theme with families through a Peachjar announcement and flyer. To promote the theme further, we had a premiere, usually in the form of an engaging video, which was revealed on our very popular Facebook page. For example, one week was dedicated to showing gratitude and thanks to essential workers by posting signs on lawns, windows, and doors, while another week was dedicated to a celebration of Earth Day. One of our most popular weeks was devoted to a Food Network theme whereby families, staff, and faculty shared recipes and cooking/baking videos or pictures. Regardless of the theme, students, families, and teachers alike shared pictures and videos reflective of the theme, which were then posted on our Facebook page. The positive Facebook page reactions and comments from our families, though from afar, helped to bring us together at a time when we needed one another the most.



Thank Essential Workers  
Week



Sports  
Week



Earth  
Week



Food Network  
Week

At W.A. Wettel Elementary School, our sense and strength of community prior to the COVID crisis was the building block that allowed us to continue learning while distant from our students and families. Our focus on community during the remote learning period sustained our amazing bond with our families. We will carry this partnership forward as we meet the challenges of a new school year together.



## W.A. Wettel Elementary

# Special Graduation Celebrations

Though we had a unique and at times challenging school year, we ended the year with amazing graduation festivities for our fantastic kindergarten and sixth grade students. Our in-person graduation ceremony for both classes included a Hollywood-themed event, replete with a red velvet stanchion, a red carpeted entry, swag bags, and among other features, teacher-paparazzi snapping a lot of pictures of our VIP's. A special thanks to our kinder and sixth grade teachers, Mrs. Sniezek and Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Harrington and Mrs. Woodard, for their creativity and hosting such special events for our students and families.



## VVS District

# Genesis Group Teacher Appreciation Recipients

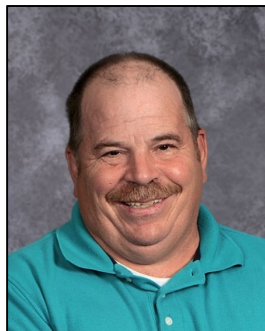
During Teacher Appreciation Week in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis, The Genesis Group and First Source Federal Credit Union partnered to recognize teachers and staff in the Mohawk Valley region who went above and beyond their duties to make a positive impact in the lives of their students. Five VVS faculty and staff members were recognized for their outstanding contributions to the school community during this time. We are proud to recognize the following recipients of the Genesis Group Teacher Appreciation Recognition:



Mr. Chris Carr



Mrs. Julie Minckler



Mr. Mark Peavey



Mr. Alex Rose



Mrs. Kathie Whipple



VVS District

## VVS Support Services - Beyond Essential

We are so proud of our essential workers, who have worked tirelessly over the past several months to support our students. As of June, the food service and transportation staff had prepared and delivered nearly 100,000 meals to VVS families. In addition, over 3,000 gallons of milk were distributed through local partnerships and through the hard work of our essential staff members including our food service, transportation, and building and grounds departments.

Our food service team arrived each day to prepare breakfasts and lunches for VVS students. They stayed positive by working as a team and by dancing while they worked! Our transportation team was commended by dozens of volunteers for their knowledge of the district, of our families, and for showing up day after day to do what only they are qualified to do.

The buildings and grounds staff reported to work each day to take on projects which helped to keep our team of essential workers safe. They installed hand sanitizing stations, posted signage and routinely cleaned behind faculty and staff who signed in to visit their classrooms, picking up teaching materials. Between cleaning tasks, our buildings and grounds crew was able to take on projects that would have been done over the summer when buildings are closed, including rewiring lighting and converting original lighting to LED, among other projects.



**VVS Central School District**  
May 28 · 🌐

Thank you to the Oneida County Sheriff's Department for coming to visit us today!

10,065 Views

**Oneida County Sheriff's Office** was live — at J D George Elementary School.  
May 28 · Verona, NY · 🌐

Today we visited the VVS Central School District to see their meal program. If you are in the VVS School District and you are interested in meals please email j...  
[See More](#)

Watch together with friends or with a group Start

995 People Reached      314 Engagements      Boost Unavailable

👍❤️ 56      9 Comments 9 Shares

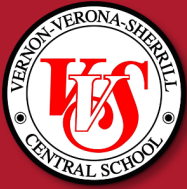
Our leaders in the support departments have shown dedication and perseverance in troubleshooting any obstacle that came their way since the start of the school closure. Their positivity and enthusiasm in leading our teams of essential workers through challenging times is unmatched. We are so incredibly proud of their leadership and to serve alongside each of them on the leadership team.

Finally, we thank the dozens of volunteers who signed up to assist with meal preparation and delivery each day for months on end. Your dedication to the district makes us incredibly proud and is why VVS stands out as a district, and a school community, of distinction.

## FYI

We want to include all of our families and friends on our mailing list. If you know of someone who has not received this newsletter, or has never been included in our mailing, please call:

April Sobieraj  
(315) 829-7412



## Vernon Verona Sherrill Central School District

City School District of the City of Sherrill  
5275 State Route 31, PO Box 128  
Verona, NY 13478

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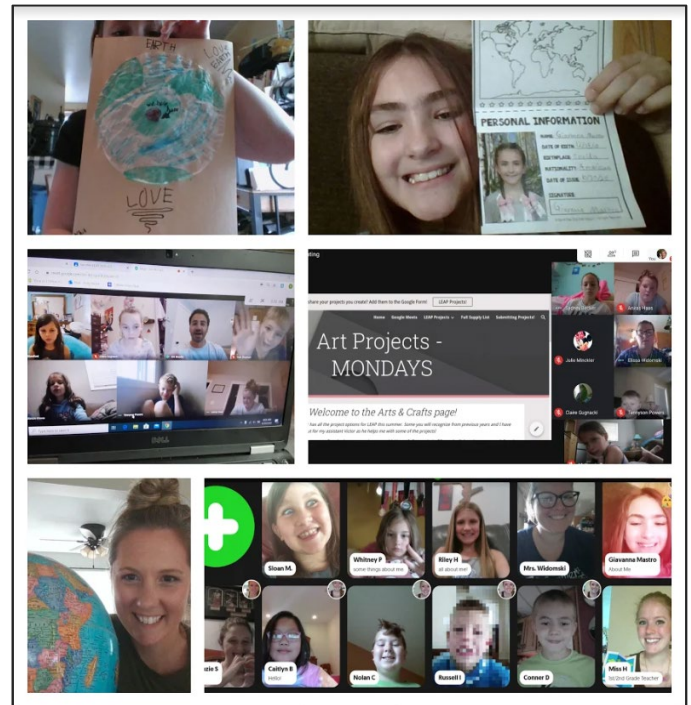
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## VVS Summer LEAP

# A Virtual Tour Around the World!

What do you get when you add 17 teachers and staff, 100 student registrants and mix in a global pandemic? Virtual Summer LEAP 2020! LEAP is VVS's summer enrichment program for students currently in grades K – 6, traditionally held half-days on site at J.D. George Elementary. We offer fun activities focused around ELA, math, science, FCS, physical education, Spanish, music, library, creative writing, and history, and sprinkle special guest appearances throughout by many local and state programs. This year the offerings were the same, but due to gathering restrictions LEAP was presented online using Google Meets for face-to-face instruction (pre-recorded lessons that the students could access at more convenient times throughout the 5-week program), and Google Classrooms to assign and collect student projects based on this summer's theme, Around the World. Real-time cooking lessons, a mystery series, math activities involving famous cities and sites around the world, simple musical instrument creation, "get up and move" PE time, scary story read-alouds, a "Love Your Lakes" documentary created just for LEAP, and activities learning about many different countries and cultures all offered our students a relaxing and fun way to stay connected with their friends and teachers. Judging from the smiles and comments posted by the kids, they agreed that this year's LEAP program was a success!



VVS - It's a great place to learn, to work, and to live!