



Fall 2016 Newsletter

District News



Community Strength

On September 20, 50+ members of the community, staff and PV Town officials met with the Communities That Care Coalition to look at the most significant challenges facing our children. The consensus on social-emotional issues and drug and alcohol concerns provide priorities for our efforts on behalf of students.

For more information please email jdenike@pvcasd.org

Can High School Start Later than 7:10?

Based on research demonstrating the effect of insufficient sleep on adolescent brains, cognition, emotional response and behavior, the Board of Education initiated an exploration of the feasibility of a later start time at the High School. After soliciting membership from the community, students, staff and parents, a 34 member committee was appointed by the Board of Education on September 22 and convened on September 29 to discuss its mission and approach to the study. After a [presentation](#) on rationale and related issues, the committee broke into sub-committees to look at several options, analyzing educational, co-curricular and fiscal impact. On October 6, the committee met again to hear from our transportation consultant who described a number of approaches to reducing the three tier bus-system to two runs in order to move the start time later than the current 7:10 first period bell. Putnam Valley and Carmel are the only districts in the region starting that early. Yorktown starts at 7:17; Mahopac and Haldane start at 7:30. Findings of the committee will be presented at an coming BOE meeting.

Rising Stars:

National Merit Semifinalist - Senior Mariana Silva

Area Allstate Musicians - Chloe Berger, Casey Dath, Sophia George, Peter Leo, Gavon Mitchell, Lauren Rein, Marianna Silva

Not pictured: Kayla Cobelli, Emma Rippon



Careers for Disabilities Award

Assistant Superintendent Natalie Doherty and CSE Chair Melissa Cafaro honored at event for creating a hospital based career entry program for students with disabilities at the high school.



Proactive Water Testing

The District took proactive measures to test for lead in water sources used for drinking when the test recommendations first emerged last spring. While we remediated the few necessary areas at the Elementary School, recent legislation passed in New York State required further testing of all faucets in every location in all NYS schools. That testing was completed at the Elementary School and is in process at the Middle School and High School. [Results](#) are posted on the website, and we will now be remediating areas of concern. The state may provide aid to offset the testing and remediation costs. All drinking water sources where lead has been discovered at rates higher than the approved level have been turned off.


**PUTNAM VALLEY
HIGH SCHOOL**

TheatreWorks

Proudly Presents

KEN LUDWIG'S

**LEND ME A
TENOR**



"Lend Me a Tenor (Ludwig)" is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.

\$12.00 for Adults

\$6.00 for 18 & under & Senior Citizens

Friday, November 4, 2016 - 7:00 PM

Saturday, November 5, 2016 - 7:00 PM

Sunday, November 6, 2016 - 2:00 PM

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FREE

Creating an Environmentally Friendly Energy System

The District is working with ConEd Solutions to develop an energy performance plan to continue efforts to create a sustainable and environmentally friendly energy system in the schools. Currently, our geothermal heating and cooling system at the High School and Middle School produces energy without the use of oil. The Board is looking to expand geothermal to the Elementary School, install solar panels to reduce electrical costs at all schools and implement energy saving lighting measures across the district as well the replacement of some windows and doors. Energy performance contracts represent guaranteed cost installations with a defined payback period whereby the energy efficiencies create savings that outweigh the costs. As part of this project, the District will be working on a K-12 curriculum to educate students on scientific principles are reflected in real world problem solving. One of the more difficult decisions involved in project development is the need to cut mature trees that are adjacent to the Elementary School. Shade created by these trees becomes an obstacle to solar energy production and creates some concern with regard to safety and roof damage. In order to analyze the impact of the tree-cutting project, the District is working closely with Cornell Extension to plan the project and replace the large trees with appropriate and sustainable understory trees and plants to recreate the green landscape. We are planning to film a walk around the school led by the Cornell scientist to explain the tree-cutting and planting process. Board discussion of the project with engineers has been ongoing at District Board meetings. [Videos are available on our website.](#)

Emergency Safety Plans

The District has been working with the Rapid Responder program as we update and improve our safety planning process. In accordance with state legislation, we are training new staff and covering areas such as suicide prevention and response, mental health intervention and all areas of safety and threat response. Mr. Bellino, Director of Operations, Facilities, Transportation and Technology, serves as our Chief Emergency Officer as required by New York State. One of the changes in the safety legislation is the requirement that schools conduct eight fire drills or evacuations and four lockdowns. At one of the High School lockdowns this year, the NY State Police K-9 unit will walk through our schools. Local and state police have done tours of our buildings and practice sessions as part of the more stringent efforts to protect schools.

Anonymous Alerts

As part of the District's efforts to ensure a safe environment for all students, we are planning to install an "anonymous alerts" app for phone and website. This would be a way for anyone who has a serious or urgent concern about safety of any member of the school community to alert the administration with complete anonymity. The District would investigate any notification. The alert system should be utilized only for serious concerns including, but not limited to, bullying, abuse, harassment, self-harm or suicide, threats of harm, drug abuse or selling to students. Currently, our PV App provides a comment icon. Please check it out.

PV Athletics

The numbers are up for many of our fall sports. We have 259 total PV athletes this fall for JV/V compared to 218 last year (approximately a 19% increase). [Family ID](#) is now in place. This is a simple, secure registration program to streamline athletic registration. Winter registration for JV and Varsity is due 11/4, modified is due 11/18.

The athletic trainer Megan Smithuysen has been doing a great job covering all of our home contests and away varsity football games. She has also been coordinating the ImpACT (concussion) tests for the district. The coaches, athletes and parents have been reporting how happy they are to have a full-time trainer.

Building Social and Emotional Health & Strength

It has become more evident that mental health issues and emotional concerns are barriers to learning. The District has a strong clinical staff that supports students, and provides a number of programs to create a positive learning environment. Some of these programs include the work of the Character Committee and Great Expectations at the Elementary School, anti-bullying and PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Support) at the Middle School and High School. We now are looking at examining our programs to ensure that the effort is systemic and effective. We will be receiving a grant through Senator Serino's office to provide a strengths based suicide prevention program at the high school. As part of our needs-based model, we are examining the results of our most recent drug and alcohol survey in grades 8-12 to see where we need to target our efforts to create a protective and pro-social environment for students. Survey results will be presented at the November 17 BOE meeting.



Another grant from the Putnam Valley Education Foundation resulted in Mindfulness training for over 50 staff and community members to pursue a strategy that allows students and staff to manage stress and build cognitive and emotional strength from within. Selected as a BOCES student engagement regional conference presenter: Joe Mahoney, PVHS Math teacher, will demonstrate how mindset concepts can shape effective instructional strategies.

New Educational Initiatives at PV Schools

PV Elementary School

- With the help of two high school teachers (Bruce Ludovicy and Ryan Odell), Director of Facilities, Pat Bellino, and our maintenance staff, the District is constructing an “outdoor classroom” adjacent to the school, to enhance learning across the disciplines. The classroom provides a unique learning environment and contributes to the focus on an essential question: Why is nature important in our lives?
- Teachers at the Elementary School have contributed their efforts and ideas to create a remarkable maker-space as a place to creatively apply learning in all subject areas and build problem-solving and collaboration skills. This maker-space can be used by all classes in the school, facilitating a connection to their engaging curriculum.
- The Safety Patrol is a way to include students in creating a safe place for all. Fourth graders take their protective role very seriously and build leadership skills through training and experience. Our fourth grade safety patrollers for the fall season are doing an outstanding job promoting kindness, safety, respect and responsibility in our school.



PV Middle School

- As part of the Schools to Watch program, the Middle School self-study has reached the second stage: a visit by a critical friends committee to measure effectiveness according to the criteria of the recognition program.
- Innovative Design in Education (IDE) is a program that trains and coaches teachers to build standards-based lessons and learning environments that apply learning in real-world problem solving experiences. These are structured to give students an authentic opportunity to show what they know. Students are empowered to create and problem solve using new knowledge in engaging and meaningful ways. A first cohort of teachers has been trained, and they are engaging students through this new lens.

PV High School

- The new Achievement Center at the High School provides a safe and supportive environment for learning and student success. With extra help from teachers in a small class setting, students come on their own, or with encouragement, to improve their grades and their emotional connections at the high school.
- Implementation of PVHS “ASPIRE” acronym for Awareness, Safety, Perseverance, Integrity, Respect and Empathy, as a model for connecting a positive climate for learning with academic achievement.
- Honors option in chemistry as a way to include more students in aspiring to high expectations. Learning supports are provided as well as a challenging program to promote advanced learning for all.
- An International Baccalaureate study group is exploring the possibility of introducing the IB program to the High School. Teachers are visiting successful programs in the region to build an understanding of the way this program enhances student opportunity and growth.
- Coming soon: Peer Mediation and Conflict Resolution program to build in better supports to strengthen the learning environment.
- Popular new electives: Media, Hacker High School, First Aid, Coding
- Exciting new clubs: Guitar, student run technology team, redesigned Student Government
- New implementation of consistent attendance policy