



**Fall 2023
Volume VIII, No. 1**

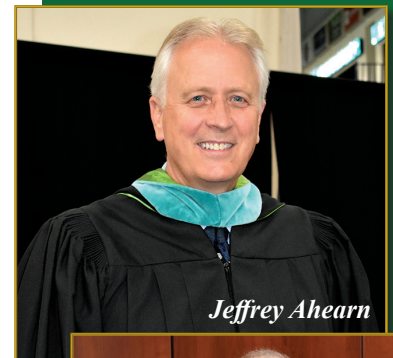
Universal Pre-K students at the Cub Care campus, Vincent, Emmy, and Trevor, take a break during math and literacy centers.

In the Superintendent's Den...

We bid heartfelt “Best Wishes” to retiring Superintendent Jeffrey Ahearn. Mr. Ahearn’s last day leading the Vestal CSD was October 27, 2023. He devoted 10 years of service to Vestal, first as Assistant Superintendent for Finance, Operations & Personnel, and then as our Superintendent of Schools.

As we said “goodbye” to Mr. Ahearn, we also welcomed our new Superintendent, Clifford Kasson, who assumed leadership of the District on October 28. A Vestal resident for 27 years and a parent of three Golden Bear graduates, Mr. Kasson has served Vestal since 2006. He has supported our students in many roles - Assistant Principal at Vestal Middle School, Assistant Principal at Vestal High School, Principal of Vestal High School, and Deputy Superintendent for the District. With 30 years in education, he was recognized as a Project Lead the Way Outstanding Administrator last school year, one of only 11 administrators across the nation to be so honored!

As a stalwart Golden Bear, our former Deputy Superintendent is looking forward to expanding his leadership role. “I am honored and excited to be selected as the next Superintendent,” said Mr. Kasson.



Jeffrey Ahearn



Clifford Kasson



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Upcoming Date Reminders:

IB/AP Exam Registrations Due: Nov. 1

NYSSMA Junior High Area All-State: Nov. 3 & 4

SAT: Nov. 4, 7:45 a.m. (Vestal HS)

Daylight Savings Time ends: Nov. 5 (Fall Back 1 Hr.)

School Board Meeting: 6 p.m., Nov. 7

(Administration Building Board Conference Room)

Vestal Voices Cabaret: 7 p.m., Nov. 8 (Vestal HS)

Early Release Day: Nov. 9

(VMS dismisses at 10:45 a.m., VHS at 11:05 a.m.,
& Elementary at 11:45 a.m.)

Vestal Community Band/VHS Wind Ensemble

Concert: 7 p.m., Nov. 9 (Vestal HS)

Veterans Day: Nov. 10 - No School

District Choral Concert: 7 p.m., Nov. 16

(African Road Auditorium)

Vendor Night/Craft Fair: 6 p.m., November 17

(Vestal Hills)

School Photo Make-ups/Retakes:

November 1 - Glenwood Elementary

November 9 - Vestal Middle School

November 15 - Clayton Avenue & Tioga Hills

November 16 - African Road & Vestal Hills

November 21 - VHS Underclassmen (Gr. 9 - 11)

November 28 - Universal Pre-K at Cub Care

November 22 - 24: Thanksgiving Break/No School

NYSSMA All-State Festival: Nov. 30 - Dec. 3

Holiday Craft Fair: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Dec. 3

(Vestal HS)

*Updated Event Information can be found on the
electronic calendar of the school district website.*

Updating Emergency Contact Info

With the start of a new school year, we wanted to remind parents and guardians to update your contact information. We need your most current phone numbers/email addresses on file in case your child should become ill and need to be picked up. The systems we use to communicate other important information, such as School Messenger, also rely on the contacts you provide. Call your child's school any time during the school year to update your contact details.

Water Quality in Vestal Schools

Revisions to Public Health Law (PHL) sect. 1110, which governs schools' potable water testing and standards went into effect December 22, 2022.

The key revision is that, beginning in 2023, New York State has set the revised action level of lead in drinking water from 15 parts per billion (ppb) to 5 ppb. The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) safe-level requirement remains at 15 ppb.

A total of 855 sources were tested district-wide between July and August 2023. All water samples were analyzed and those from potable drinking sources found to be above 5 ppb were remediated, disabled, and/or marked with signage to prevent use. Outlets currently or potentially used for drinking or cooking were remediated and retesting has taken place to ensure the locations are in compliance with New York State standards. We are awaiting those results.

For more information on water quality in Vestal Schools, visit www.vestal.stier.org/WaterQualityTestinginVestalSchools.aspx

Champions Before- & After-School Program

Vestal CSD recognizes the importance of quality child care for our families. As an option, we have allowed third-party Champions, a brand of KinderCare Learning Companies, to offer their program in our district. It is currently available for Grades K - 5 in every Vestal elementary school. The Champions program is not affiliated with the Vestal CSD; tuition fees apply. Contact Champions at 800-246-2154 or www.discoverchampions.com.

Challenge

Changes in Administrative Leadership *continued from cover*

“I am committed to lead by example and by listening to the voices of students, families and staff. Our three daughters benefited from the excellence of Vestal’s K - 12 education, and I am dedicated to ensuring Vestal’s high standards for all of our students!”

New Director of Special Education

A big Golden Bear hug to new Director of Special Education Katherine Mazourek! Mrs. Mazourek joins us from Unatego Central School District where she served as Director of Special Programs. She has a rich instructional background, bringing to Vestal over 29 years of experience in education. She began her career as a General Music Teacher and Music Therapist for Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES in Ithaca, teaching students with multiple disabilities. She also served as vocal and general music teacher in Newfield and Richfield Springs school districts, respectively, before heading south to teach Music in Arkansas. Other appointments included Assistant Principal for elementary schools in North Carolina and Arkansas, as well as an elementary principal in Arkansas. She returned to Upstate New York in 2014, where she was Principal of Unatego Elementary School before her promotion to Director of Special Education.



Mrs. Mazourek earned her Bachelor’s of Music in Education from Mansfield University, her MS in Education from Elmira College, and her MS in School Administration from Gardner-Webb University (NC). Her administrative certification came from SUNY Oswego.

Assistant Director of Special Education



Rounding out our administrative team in the Special Education Department is Angelia Eggleston, who began as the Assistant Director of Special Education on August 23, 2023. Mrs. Eggleston worked as a special educator at Broome-Tioga BOCES for seven years before serving as Committee for Special Education Chair in the Cortland Enlarged School District.

A native of Binghamton, she graduated from Binghamton HS and then earned her degrees from SUNY Cortland. During her early days, post-college, she enjoyed subbing and coaching in many local districts around the Greater Binghamton area.

Administrator of Managed Technology Services

Jenn Weston assumed her new role as Administrator for Vestal’s Managed Technology Services with Broome-Tioga BOCES on July 31. She joins us from the Binghamton City School District where she was, most recently, a second-grade teacher.

Mrs. Weston received her BS in Childhood Education from SUNY Cortland and her Master’s in Special Education from Binghamton University. She then returned to SUNY Cortland to earn her CAS in Educational Leadership.



She spent her teaching career as a second-grade teacher at Binghamton's Woodrow Wilson Elementary School. During her time in that district, she coached lacrosse, was an active member of the building’s shared leadership team, and facilitated professional development for Comprehensive Learner Record (CLR) practices. During the last eight years in the classroom, Mrs. Weston has grown her passion for instructional technology. She is eager to begin working with Vestal Staff this school year to enhance opportunities for our students and staff.



Clockwise from center; Brother and sister in the Pre-Kindergarten classroom at the Cub Clubhouse. Emil and Adelyn share a seat on the African drum. Sammy and Elias are greeted by Mrs. Galt on the first day of school... Kooper steps into a lesson during Glenwood's Kindergarten. The boys as tour guides for Kindergarten students. Majka, Eli Commene, and Jaxon Hill with Brady outside the Art room... At Vestal Hills, ten on the first day of school. (Photo by Dyl



er Cairo and Egypt explore their Universal
Care campus during Orientation...
can Road playground during orientation...
le when they get off the bus at Clayton Avenue
off the school bus after a bus ride and safety
Orientation... Tioga Hills fifth-graders serve
and their families during Orientation. Thomas
h their charges - Lincoln, Willow, Reagan, and
ills, Ava Adwoa is ready to take on Kindergar-
(an Ruffo)



Vestal Middle School

This year, VMS hosted incoming sixth-graders for a week in August called "Sixth-Grade Beginnings." It gave the newest middle-schoolers a chance to acclimate to their school, learn about school culture, and receive tips about adjusting to changing classes, lockers, and more. It was followed later in the month by Sixth-Grade Orientation on August 28, 2023. To ensure they began the year in the right mindset, VMS students also participated in Chalk the Walk* September 11 - 15.

Clockwise from right, Sixth-graders from opposite ends of the district, Cameron Mallery and Ayden Berton, bond during a Sixth-Grade Beginnings session...

Sophie Sweet, Muskan Rani, and Mariah Hickson write affirming messages during Chalk the Walk... Assistant Principal McKenna helped Acadia Yan decipher her schedule during Orientation.



Vestal High School Opening Day

A red-carpet welcome greeted Vestal HS students as they arrived for the first day of school, September 7, 2023.

Ninth-graders Joyce, Ella, Mikayla, and Samantha gear up for their first day of high school.



**Vestal High School also participated in BC Safe's "Chalk the Walk."*

Challenge



"US News & World Report" Rating

Vestal High School continues to be rated as one of the Best High Schools in the country as part of the "U.S. News & World Report" listing for 2023.

On behalf of our students, their families, our faculty, staff, administrators and School Board, we are proud to acknowledge this designation.

2023 Yale Educator Award

They say the best teachers teach from the heart... that is certainly true of Mrs. Nicole Ewing, Spanish teacher at VHS. She was nominated by Class of 2023 graduate Samson Wong for the Yale Office of Undergraduate Admissions' Yale Educator Award. Among 385 nominees representing 43 states and 28 countries, Mrs. Ewing was one of only 80 teachers and 32 counselors selected to receive this prestigious award!



2024 National Merit Semifinalists and Commended Students

We are pleased to congratulate our National Merit Scholarship Program Semifinalists and Commended Students at Vestal High School.

Seniors Ian Chung, Rayna Cui, and Mia Perfetti qualified as Semifinalists, among the only 16,000 recognized nationwide! They have an opportunity to continue in the competition for scholarship awards that will be offered in Spring 2024.



Semifinalists Mia Perfetti, Ian Chung, and Rayna Cui

In addition, seniors Sriram Chakravadhanula, Alaina Domingo, Miron Sulicz, Samantha Tumey, and Tony Zhou were recognized as Commended Students. They are among the 34,000 Commended Students recognized across the nation!



Commended Students Tony Zhou, Miron Sulicz, Sriram Chakravadhanula, Samantha Tumey, and Alaina Domingo



**Vestal Central
School District**
201 Main Street
Vestal, NY 13850

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Inclement Weather Reminder for Parents/ Guardians



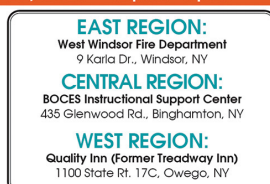
When Vestal Central School District closes school mid-session for extreme weather, parents of students who ride the bus are always welcome to pick their children up if you have a concern. We ask that you please call the school's main office to inform them of your intention to pick your child up from school that day.



NOVEMBER 29, 2023 12 p.m. - 8 p.m.



For more information, visit www.btiboces.org



Health Reminders

From the B.C. Health Department -

COVID-19 is still with us, but resources continue to be available from the Broome County Health Department. You can get free at-home test kits, report positive test results online, and find COVID-19 vaccine clinics. Visit <https://www.gobroomecounty.com/hd/coronavirus>

From the District -

As always, if your child is sick, please do not send them to school. Use this QR code to visit the CDC's "Isolation & Precautions for People with COVID-19" web page for guidance on what to do if you or your student(s) test positive.



Flu Shot Reminder - Seasonal flu vaccinations are recommended for almost everyone, age 6 months and older. Fall is an ideal time to schedule a flu vaccine. Schedule annual flu shots with your health care provider or pharmacy. This year, National Influenza Vaccination Week is December 4 - 8, 2023.