



# Bulldog

## BULLETIN

September 2023

## Message from the Superintendent

Welcome Back to the 2023-2024 School Year! I am so excited for this school year to begin and we are off to a great start. In this edition of the Bulldog Bulletin, you will read about our new principal at South Avenue Elementary, Kelly Amendola, and some teacher leaders who attended advanced training in Responsive Classroom this summer. This edition also includes information about Girls in Sports Day, which is an amazing new tradition in Beacon that opens new sports up to many of our students.

Thanks for reading!

—Matt Landahl



Principals, teachers and staff from across Beacon excitedly greeted new and returning students as they started their first day of classes of the 2023-2024 school year on September 5.

At Rombout Middle School, Principal Brian Soltish and Vice Principal Michael

Carofano were directing

traffic for parents dropping off their children with a little help from other school staff. Soltish even helped some students find their first classes of the day.



Seventh grader Callie Winther is most looking forward to catching up with old friends and meeting new ones, as well as learning Spanish. She feels this will broaden her horizons.

"I feel like it could be useful if you're taking a job in the future," Winther said. "You can do different things with a language."



At JV Forrestal Elementary, students getting off the bus and being dropped off by their parents were greeted with a chorus of energetic teachers and Principal Crystal Sessoms-Wiggins. Some parents took pictures of their young learners before classes.



Glenham Elementary teachers Jane Sylvester, Theresa Carola and Heather Nolan each started the day by having their students share fun facts about each other, introduce themselves and test their memory on their new classmates.

Scarlett Mejia, a fifth grader in Tom Hoyle's class, spent her first period working on a back to school word search in Tom Hoyle's class. Her favorite subject is science and she is most excited to join the school's running club for girls. "You get to run a lot and I like running," Mejia said.



## Responsive Classroom Initiatives Keep Students Engaged



Teachers at Sargent Elementary School have helped their students build community within the building using a social emotional program called Responsive Classroom. Now, two of them are ready to take it to the next level.

Nicole Winchell, who teaches fourth grade, and Trish Silverman, who teaches kindergarten, took an advanced four-day Responsive Classroom training in late

July in South River, New Jersey, while first grade teacher Kaitlyn Perlono and fourth grade special education teacher Nicole Piqueras attended a core training.

This evidence-based approach to teaching and discipline focuses on engaging academics, positive community and developmental awareness.

"Implementing Responsive Classroom over the past couple of years has been so effective and rewarding for my students," Winchell said. "I am so excited to implement even more strategies."

Winchell finds conducting a morning meeting with students is one of many effective strategies Responsive Classroom offers.

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## Upcoming Events

### Sargent ES and Forrestal ES "Meet the Teacher Nights"

JV Forrestal and Sargent elementary schools will be hosting their annual Meet the Teachers Nights for the 2023-2024 school year. This serves as a great opportunity to meet your child's teachers, see all the wonderful things they're learning about in school and socialize with other families.

#### Sargent's ES

**September 20** at 6 pm

#### Forrestal's ES

**September 28** at 6 pm

### Girls Varsity Soccer Games

Come out and show support for our lady bulldogs as they kick their way to victory during these upcoming matches both on home turf and away at different schools.

#### Home Games

**September 21**

Playing Haldane at 6:30 pm

**October 2**

Playing Chester Academy at 4:30 pm

**October 3**

Playing James I. O'Neill at 4:30 pm

# Upcoming Events

Girls Varsity Soccer Games cont'd...  
**Away Games**  
**September 20**  
Playing Newburgh F. A. at 4 pm  
**September 26**  
Playing Liberty at 4:30 pm  
**September 29**  
Playing Washingtonville at 4:30 pm  
**October 6**  
Playing Chester Academy at 5:15 pm



## Spirit of Beacon Day Parade

Show off your Beacon school spirit during this annual community spectacle on **September 24**. The parade, starting at 1 pm, travels down Main Street between Wolcott and Tioronda Avenues.  
More information can be found at:  
<https://www.spiritofbeacon.org>



# Responsive Classroom Initiatives Keep Students Engaged *Cont'd*

"I have gained more knowledge in effective teacher language, constructive discipline, energizers, strategies to group students during academic learning and so much more," Winchell explained. "The engagement, excitement and student responsibility has been such a success in my classroom."  
Silverman took the core Responsive Classroom last summer and was so impressed by it that she implemented much of what she learned into her classroom. She noticed her students were less cohesive on the rare day it was not used. "I could feel the difference in the kids," Silverman said. "I improved my morning meeting and made it the most important part of our day."



During the recent training, Silverman and her fellow educators focused heavily on teacher-student language and interactive modeling, which pushes students to notice what their teacher is doing and why.  
"The kids need to know why things we are doing in the classroom are important to the structure of our day," Silverman explained. "Using what we learned about Teacher Student Language also shows our students how to be respectful, clear and hopefully, independent problem solvers."



# South Avenue ES Welcomes New Principal



Kelly Amendola is the new principal at South Avenue Elementary School and is eager to meet students, staff and parents and provide the best educational experience possible for everyone.

The veteran educator's main goal for the year is to build relationships at school and in the community.

"This includes building relationships with the students because they should have a voice in things that happen," explained Amendola. "Building relationships with the teachers and staff because they know how things work is important."

One reason why Amendola values this relationship-building, is because she believes such connections are the foundation of a healthy educational system.

"It's something that means a lot to me as an educator," Amendola said. "Without that basis of community and relationships, you don't have anything."



about under the banner of "180 Days at South Avenue."

"I thought it would be a good thing to showcase," Amendola said.

Amendola knew from a young age that she wanted to be a teacher. After earning

To keep up with this idea, Amendola plans to use the school's social media pages to showcase what students are learning

a bachelor's in geology from SUNY New Paltz and a master's in education from Mercy College, she started her career in the Bronx as a science teacher for nine years. Amendola then served as an assistant principal in at South Middle School in Newburgh, before joining South Avenue. "You always hear these great things about Beacon and what they're doing," Amendola said.

Outside of school, Amendola does CrossFit, plays soccer and enjoys arts and crafts with her family. She is also raising a puppy named Lucy to be a certified therapy dog, in the hopes that she can assist people outside of the school environment as much as she will at South Avenue.

2023



# GIRLS IN SPORTS DAY

Come out to try all the sports BCSD Athletics has to offer and Meet the program coaches!  
All girls in grades 3-8 are encouraged to attend!

**MORE INFORMATION** on next page...



2023



# GIRLS IN SPORTS DAY



**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**9:00 AM TO 2:00 PM @ Beacon High School**

**COST: \$25.00 PER STUDENT**

**LUNCH, T-SHIRT, AND ALL EQUIPMENT NEEDED WILL BE PROVIDED  
(bring own swimming gear)**

The Girls in Sports Day event for 2023 promises to be a valuable resource for prospective athletes, from 3<sup>rd</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade.



The September 23<sup>rd</sup> event, which is celebrating its fourth year, will have female students meet at Beacon High School with various girls Junior Varsity and Varsity coaches to learn about various sports and how to play them with the hope of exposing potential future athletes to early coaching. Practice starts at 9 am.

"The initiative for this event really came from seeing how low enrollment was for Junior Varsity back in 2018," event organizer Cathryn Biordi explained.

"With the implementation of this program, we really believe that we've overcome that hurdle."

The benefits of girls playing sports are numerous and include higher body esteem and self-confidence, being better at setting priorities and developing leadership skills, according to the Children's Medical Group.

Last year's guest speaker, BHS alum and college basketball player Lauren Schetter, noted that the event is beneficial for students to find out which sports they are passionate about early on. She went from sport to sport, until she eventually found one she had loved.

"If I stuck with soccer I would have never known I had a passion for basketball," Schetter said. "If you want to figure out what your passion is, today is a great day to figure out which sport it is."

This year's guest speaker is Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) player and Dutchess County native Maddy Siegrist.

# GIRLS IN SPORTS DAY



**FamilyID**  
powered by **ArbiterSports**

You can register your child by signing up on FamilyID, scanning the included QR code or visiting:  
<https://www.familyid.com/beacon-city-school-district/2023-girls-in-sports-day>



Thanks for reading our



If you have a submission idea, email: [desiree.gagnon@dcbooces.org](mailto:desiree.gagnon@dcbooces.org)