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## Superintendent's Message

Now that we have passed the first quarter of the school year, I wanted to use this space to give our community an update on progress regarding the priorities we've established. Most importantly, our entire team of adults has really done an amazing job of ensuring that each child experiences joy, value, and connection as a feature of their school day. Joy, value and connection are more than just nice,



Michael Cornell Superintendent

feel-good words, but, instead a district priority because the research demonstrates that students attend school more often, perform better academically, and have better mental and emotional health when they:

- Have fun at school The most recent research on brain function tells us that the brain is physically better able to learn when the learning takes place in a joyful environment
- Feel valued at school The education research and our experience clearly demonstrate that when students feel valued by the adults at school, they form more productive relationships and have better academic and social-emotional outcomes at school
- Are connected at school When students are connected to their classmates through collaborative learning experiences, their school through activities and clubs, and to their community, they establish a strong sense of belonging which leads to a more positive school experience.

Students and staff alike have taken important leadership roles in ensuring our high school student leaders planned homecoming activities that led to the greatest participation we've had in the last 10 years. Our Parent Child Connection, with financial support from multiple community partners, including Board of Education Vice President Cam Hall and our Hamburg Central School District PTSA, brought the Free Hugs Project back to Hamburg in early October.

Most important, however, is the amazing work of our educators, coaches and support staff that I have had the opportunity to appreciate through hundreds of classroom visits and the dozens of other school-related events I have attended since school started in September. Each of these opportunities allows me to appreciate all that each member of our team does to promote the learning and growth of each child. Our school-based administrators and our district office team are also actively engaged providing support, resources and inspiration for all of these experiences that truly touch the lives of our students and their families.

The learning, and the learning culture, in each classroom in each school reflects the priorities of the HCSD Strategic Plan, which has provided an essential framework for all of our work in the district since 2016. Our 65+ member Strategic Planning Team has already met twice this year, engaging in facilitated dialogue regarding each priority area. Closely aligned to our District Vision of "educating modern learners who create, care, solve and discover", this plan has become a way of life in our schools. Importantly, we will continue to update our plan according to the progress we continue to make on our three priorities, which are:

- Providing outstanding learning opportunities for each child every day.
- Ensuring that our communication within, and outside of, our organization is timely, relevant, complete and accessible for children, families, our staff and the community.
- Delivering excellence in the areas that support the learning of our children; Facilities Management, Food Service, Fiscal Governance and Transportation.

While we are pleased the advances we've made over the past seven and a half years I've served this community as Superintendent, we are also mindful that we have many opportunities for growth. The work of our Strategic Planning Committee has proven that our educators, support teams, administrators, our Board of Education, and our families remain 100% committed to leaning into these opportunities for growth so that we continue innovating around the experience that our children have in school.

Finally, please always know that the Board of Education and I appreciate your continued trust and support as we partner with our families to ensure that every child has a great day of school each day.

Sincerely,

Michael Cornell Superintendent of Schools

## A new year and new beginnings

Happy New Year! We are so excited to get the first edition of this year's Focus in your mailbox to kick off the start of a brand new year. The New Year's week release is also symbolic of a brand new direction of Focus. I want to take a moment to introduce myself, I'm Kayla Green and I am the new Community Relations Director. I started the position at the end of August, but this is my first time putting together the Focus.

When I started this job, I had conversations with other administrators about the desire to head in a different direction with this beloved newsletter. We want to give you a fresher, newer look with more color, glossy pictures, and a modern style. We also want to put the emphasis on storytelling, and I hope you'll feel like we've done that withthis issue.

I'd like to explain a bit more about where I come from and why I believe storytelling is so important. I grew up in Cheektowaga and am a proud 2015 Maryvale graduate. I attended SUNY Brockport and received my Bachelor's of Science in Journalism

and Broadcasting in 2018. I started my career as a news reporter in Rochester. In 2021, I moved back home to Buffalo to work as a reporter at News 4 WIVB. I loved the job, but felt I was destined for something new. I wanted to keep telling stories with the chance to slow down a bit and put an emphasis on the positive things happening in the community. When this position came up, it felt like the perfect fit.

Our goal is to reach as many community members as possible to showcase as many events, students, and teachers as possible. We will continue to tell these stories through videos, photos, and social media posts on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, TikTok, and, importantly, the Focus.

#### So where does the Focus fit into this new model?

While I didn't grow up in Hamburg, I also come from a tight-knit community and understand the importance of this newsletter. We are taking the legacy of

the Focus and bringing it back to its roots: telling the stories of our students. The new magazine-style publication will be released less frequently throughout the school year, but this will give us a chance to tell more in-depth stories. Rather than recapping the events that happened over the past month, we will talk about ongoing initiatives, student spotlights, and things that have really made a lasting impact. The events will still be covered on the photo spread pages, where you can get a glimpse into all the joy, value, and connection happening in our schools every single day.

I hope you'll jump on board this new journey with us. I can't wait to tell the stories of the Hamburg Schools community. In this issue you'll find stories of our efforts to ensure everyone feels valued and a sense of belonging in our district.

## Charlotte Avenue PTSA finds a new way to fundraise

Coming up with fun, unique, and effective ways to fundraise isn't always easy, and this year the Charlotte Avenue PTSA took a leap of faith on a brand new idea.

Back in October, they held a Fun Run. Students raised money in the weeks prior, and the amount being raised was filled in on a poster in the lobby. Students also had incentive to raise money, receiving prizes along the way.

It all culminated in an all-day event held behind the school on October 7. Students came out by grade level to run around the track that was set up, have some water and snacks, and celebrate all their hard work.

The students ended up raising \$28,606.

The effort was led by Charlotte PTSA vice president, Jess Reyna. She was also honored by Hamburg town supervisor,

Randy Hoak, who presented her with a town proclamation at an October PTSA meeting.

The PTSA will use the money to put on events that will directly impact kids, including a STEAM Day they hosted in December.







# Shattering the mental health stigma

It's no secret mental health struggles in youth have skyrocketed in the past few years.

**4.9.9.9.9.9** 40000

Hamburg High School social worker Tina LaMendola said one in four kids will have a mental health challenge and one in six kids will have suicidal thoughts.

Student athletes in particular are so busy and may not always have the time or know how to seek out help for mental health struggles.

That's why Mrs. LaMendola and her colleagues made it a goal to reach this particular population this school year.

These efforts started district-wide years ago, when we started training all staff in Youth Mental Health First Aid. This past fall, it continued by giving a mental health presentation to all student athletes.

When he returned from ECMC, he went to see Mrs. LaMendola. She asked the student what he thought could help other student athletes who may be struggling.

"He looked up at me and said, 'you know how they have athlete trainers that come in and do injury prevention and talk to us about rest and recovery?' And I said 'yes,' and he said, 'we need to do the same thing for mental health.' And it was like a punch in the gut. It totally made sense to me, I was like, 'why didn't we think of this sooner?" Mrs. LaMendola said.

She went through training with social worker Paul Thompson over the summer and they developed their own unique curriculum.

They gave each JV and varsity coach the chance to sign up for a 30-minute time slot the female teams, while Mr. Thompson told his to the males.

Mr. Thompson said deciding what to share with students took a lot of soul searching. He ended up sharing his experiences with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder after serving in the Army and the war. He also shared what worked for him to start feeling better.

"A lot of the time young men are asking themselves, 'can I be strong and also face my mental health challenges?' and the answer to that is obviously 'yes,' right, but for so long we've been told that you can't have both at the same time and now we're trying to break down that stigma and say, 'hey man it's ok to go ahead and face those challenges," Mr. Thompson said.

Mrs. LaMendola said she was also nervous

to be so vulnerable with students.

"I had a suicide attempt when I was 16 and through a course of therapy and medication, that really helped me find what worked for my recovery," she said.

"I learned that it's good to share your personal story, it does break down that stiama and normalizes for them that we've been through some tough stuff."

The results of the presentations have been remarkable. Most teams stayed past the allotted 30 minutes to talk and ask questions. Even better, it's already helped kids be more open in talking about their struggles.

Mrs. LaMendola said she was moved during a presentation when a student had the courage to raise her hand and share that she went to Mrs. LaMendola's coping skills group and that it really helped her.

continued on next page



Mr. Paul Thompson (left) and Mrs. Tina LaMendola (right) talk to student athletes about mental health

The idea came from a student during a counseling session with Mrs. LaMendola last year. He was a student athlete and had been struggling with anxiety and depression. He was admitted to Erie County Medical Center after having suicidal thoughts.

for their team. Most sessions were divided up by gender, although some teams, like cross country, met as a mixed group.

They decided to include their own personal stories in the presentations. Mrs. LaMendola told her personal story to



## Hamburg Highlights

Each month, we are highlighting one student and one staff member who are going above and beyond in our school community. Each building principal has the chance to submit nominations. These are a few of the remarkable people we've highlighted so far this year.

Scan to see the corresponding videos

#### **Kelly Ersing**

Music teacher at **Armor Elementary** School

Kelly Ersing has been filling the halls of Armor Elementary with music for the past five years.



Mrs. Ersing went to SUNY Fredonia for vocal performance. After graduating, she stayed in the Western New York area and realized she missed making music all the time. Mrs. Ersing went back to school for teaching, getting her masters at the University at Buffalo.

She directs the musical, teaches chorus, and even helped some 5th graders leave a legacy by writing the official Armor school song.

Mrs. Ersing had no hesitation when asked the best part of her job, "It's the kids. It's building relationships with them and laughing and smiling with them and making music with them all day."

#### **Lila Maracle**

Eighth grader at Hamburg Middle School

It's no secret: the middle school years aren't always the easiest, but students



like Lila Maracle are choosing to embrace them

"I really like how you can look back in like 15-20 years and say, 'I had some good years in middle school and high school' and not think that you wasted your childhood years," said 13-year-old Lila.

She certainly isn't wasting them. Over the past couple of years, Lila has juggled jazz band, tennis, the musical, morning announcements, bulldog ambassadors, woodworking club, yearbook club, French club, art club, and Hogwarts club, not to mention her schoolwork and tuba and horseback riding lessons outside of school.

Maracle has made a huge impact at Hamburg Middle School and while she'll

miss it, she's ready for the next challenge, high school. Until then, Lila will keep seizing every opportunity and inspiring others to do the same.

#### PJ Saikia

Teacher aide at Hamburg High School

Teacher aide PJ Saikia is bringing a little extra joy to Hamburg High School simply by saying, "hello."



Mr. Saikia is originally from Poughkeepsie, New York. He and his wife were high school sweethearts and came to Buffalo for college, but never planned to stay in the area. They fell in love with Western New York.

Mr. Saikia has four kids in the district including two in the high school.

This is Mr. Saikia's first year working in the district, but you'd never know it. He's already developed rapport with countless kids and staff members.

"I think kids really respond well when someone talks to them and my experience so far is they just want someone to talk to."

#### Sadie Mason

Fourth grader at Union Pleasant Elementary School

Sadie Mason is a bright 4th grader at Union Pleasant Elementary, but when



you get to know her, it's her heart of gold that really makes her stand out. "Making people happy kind of just makes me happy," Sadie said.

As soon as she was old enough, Sadie became a girl scout. Sadie had the idea to ask people to donate money to buy a box of girl scout cookies for every teacher at Union Pleasant.

She said she plans to do it again this year. "They work so hard all the time and they kind of just need something sweet to have to eat during lunch."

Sadie also enjoys drawing, dancing, gymnastics, and camping with her family. She can't wait to keep shining her bright light throughout Union Pleasant and wherever she may go in the future.

### Shattering the stigma continued from page 4

"What she did in that moment is she ended up helping 10 or 20 other kids right in that moment," she said. "This is a public health issue. It should be no different than going to get a cast on a broken ankle than to get support for your mental health."

That student was cheerleader Rose Carpenter. She has struggled with anxiety and depression since middle school. She said learning how to help others and yourself through mental health struggles alongside her team was refreshing.

"I feel like our whole entire team and me personally thought it was a really nice opportunity to just talk about something that every teenager honestly goes through together especially with the people that you're with constantly," Rose said.

The presentations have extended into health classes and even, by request, core classes. They also plan to present to the winter and spring sports teams and extend into modified sports. Mr. Thompson said it's amazing to see the buzz.

"Our year's theme this year is almost like shatter that stigma, bust through that wall. And then seeing it and really, really seeing it, varsity football players, hockey players, lacrosse players, these male dominated sports that are physical and for the quoteunquote "strong male" right. These guys are now knocking on my door saying 'hey I've got some anxiety, some depression, I've got an eating disorder, I've got some stuff going on.' We couldn't ask for better results."

# Spanish-speaking students welcome new student with open arms



Not everyone can say they're fluent in two languages. Even fewer people can say they've come into a school where they didn't speak the native language at all, worked hard to learn it, and can now speak it perfectly.

A group of students at Hamburg High School can resonate with one or both of those, and they recently found a way to use their bilingualism to make a huge difference in one girl's life.

Back in the fall, a new student from Cuba started at HHS. She didn't speak a word of English. The student has since transferred after her family found permanent housing in a different district, but the impact this group of Hamburg students made on her will likely stay with her for a long time.

Adriana Batista remembers getting called down to the guidance office in early October. She had no idea what the meeting was about. When she got there, guidance counselor Kathleen Battin told her the new student had started and didn't know any

English. She said she knew Adriana spoke Spanish and asked if she could help out.

"I was the first person they called down but my Spanish isn't that good, so that's when I was like, 'I know a few people who know Spanish.' So I told Ms. Battin to call them and then I would help her walk to her classes and stuff and it was nice talking to her cause she was a nice girl," Adriana said.

Adriana and her friends went into action. They helped out walking the student to her classes, explaining her situation to the teachers, and translating notes and conversations.

"I would tell the teachers that she didn't speak English and they might have to try harder with her," she said. "People around here, I

> know they use Google Translate so that's why I was saying that's the best way you can communicate with her, but she would get her work done. I would leave class early just to help her to her next class."

Naiomiliz Martinez had English as a Second Language (ESL) class with the new student. Naiomiliz said she translated everything the teacher said back to the new student. Naiomiliz said it was hard at times, but it became her routine, and she was happy to help.

"The fact that you come here and you have no clue what it's like, what do you do and everything, how to speak the language. I kind of sympathized a lot with her and I tried to- when I had her in the periods I had her I tried to help her as much as I

Leonor Rodriguez said she was excited to see the new student, as there isn't a large population of Spanish speakers in Hamburg. Leonor said she tried to help her with anything she needed.

"It feels good too 'cause not a lot of people can say they speak two languages perfectly so it makes you kind of stand out from everyone else," Leonor said.

The group became fast friends, being able to relate on moving from a Spanish-speaking country to America during their school years.

Naiomiliz moved to the United States when she was in fourth grade and also started learning English in school. Her brother William moved later in seventh grade. He said moving to the United States exceeded his expectations.

"You think they'll judge or be mean to you or something but it was honestly nice. People

Adriana lived in Puerto Rico when she was younger but grew up knowing both English and Spanish. Leonor is from Honduras and just moved to Hamburg two years ago. She's known English since she was very young.

"It wasn't as hard because I went to an American high school in my country, but I mean the culture shock still.

Another friend, Gabriela Colon, was born in the United States but didn't know any English until she was five or six years old. She also started learning in ESL. Gabriela said it felt good to help the new student navigate unfamiliar territory.

"The first year that I came here I didn't know none of these people were here so I was by myself so it was really bad but she had a whole group and stuff so I felt really good that she didn't have to feel by herself," she said.

According to the girls, the friendly faces made a difference for the new student.

"She told me I think like the third day that she was here that she was upset because she didn't know anybody that speaks Spanish but when she met us she was grateful to have us and stuff," Adriana said.

"She seemed happy," said Leonor. "She was really quiet at first but then she started talking to us, you know, as friends."

For some of the girls, it's also refreshing to get to speak Spanish with other people who also grew up with it in their homes. Adriana said her mom doesn't speak Spanish as much at home since moving to Hamburg. She said when they lived in Buffalo with her grandmother and other family members, the language was spoken at home all the time. The group of girls at school bring her back to those family memories.

"Here I get to actually have people speaking Spanish."

While the experience was a great one, the new student and her family were only staying in Hamburg temporarily, and eventually got more permanent housing in Buffalo. The girls said they were shocked to hear she was leaving.

Adriana said she still keeps in touch with her and is trying to make plans to hang out outside of school.

"It's not an everyday thing but I check up on her and stuff she tells me how she's doing," she said.

She said it made her feel good to help someone speak a different language, as she's usually the one receiving the help.

The experience bonded the girls even closer, bonding them through culture, language, and friendship.

When asked if they'd do it again if another student came in who didn't speak any English, they responded in resounding unison.

"Absolutely. Yes."



## **VAround the District**



First day of school at Armor



Armor Buffalo Bills Tie Dye Day



Boston Valley Bulldog Spirit Day



First day at Charlotte Avenue





Joy Day at Boston Valley



School spirit at Charlotte Avenue



Union Pleasant inclusion tshirts



Middle School Harry Potter Trivia Competition



High School Jazz Band performance at Buffalo History Museum



Middle School Jr. Chef Challenge



Go Bulldogs!

Fun in the Union Pleasant Giving Garden





High School Holiday Drive



The morning announcements have always been used as a way to get information out to all students and staff at the start of each day. We asked each of the principals to tell us a bit about their unique approach!

#### **High School**

"Our student government officers go on the PA and give our morning announcements. We think it's good for our students to hear the announcements from their peers, rather than a staff member. Every year, the new group of officers bring their own style and flair. It also helps these students become better, more confident public speakers."

- Assistant Principal Mike Tylock

#### **Middle School**

"Our morning announcements structurally have a few components. For students and staff, they hear them in the morning following the pledge. For those in the building, it's audio only. The video portion is posted to Youtube and shared with families via Facebook, Twitter, and our Family Communicator. We record them via iPhone, use a green screen app for the background.

Three pairs of 8th graders read our announcements, and they alternate weekly.

"Special Features" with a closing line of, "Ask yourself, how can you be an 11 today?" is a staple.

Friday jokes as told by the admin are either wildly popular or not:)"

- Principal Tom Adams

#### **Union Pleasant Elementary School**

"UPES is in our second year developing our daily digital announcements. Our initial thinking had been to modernize from our prior format and make it into a more engaging experience for our students.

Mr. Beiter works with Julie Maxson, one of our building techs. They utilize WeVideo to create a daily announcement that mirrors a newscast. We have 5th grade student reporters who utilize our green screen to "host" each episode. We include the

Pledge of Allegiance and a patriotic song each day. Student reporters also write and record their own pieces about school wide events, monthly holidays and other curricular activities.

Since the announcements are prerecorded a few days in advance we are able to include many more students in the process."

- Assistant Principal Sue Wilson

#### **Armor Elementary School**

"Our announcements are student written, produced, and presented in a morning show fashion. Students solicit and select fun facts and jokes from the student body, rehearse and and their own ad lib style pizazz as anchors, including clinking coffee mugs and adding upbeat

We begin with a school song written by last year's fifth graders in their music LABs and have guest pledge reciters, including the entire 5th grade singing together out on the

back hill. Patriotic songs are played on Fridays, but that will increase over the year.

They are recorded and played in classrooms right when the morning bell rings at 9."

- Principal Leslie Bennett

#### **Boston Valley School**

"The morning announcements are a way that our learning community begins each day together and on the same page. We are also in our second year of doing live announcements out of our Tinker Tank.

At the end of last year, we evaluated our process and made some changes, the biggest of which was

to turn production over to a team of fifth grade announcers who operate under the direction of Mrs. Amy Forrest and Mrs. Laura Biddle. All fifth grade BVS students serve on a leadership team, and while one of those teams is charged with producing the announcements, the other four teams also make appearances.

Regular segments include the Pledge of Allegiance and a patriotic song, staff and student birthdays, the daily lunch menu, a welcome to our guest teachers, and a daily joke (complete with a canned badum-bump and cymbal crash)."

- Principal Nicole Lauer

#### **Charlotte Avenue School**

"This is our third year doing video announcements. Our tech aide, Jennifer Ricey produces them with our 5th grade students.

Each day there are the the following components: Top Story, which

includes what day it is out of the six day cycle; Weather;

> What's for Lunch; a special feature story/song from music class; Birthdays; Character Reminder, this is my portion that I provide examples of how they can exemplify our monthly Top Dog Habit and character word; Pledge of Allegiance, and Patriotic Song. There are also many pictures of students.

The announcements are sent out each morning for teachers to share with their class. Students love seeing themselves on the announcements. We have found that it has really brought our community together, both at school and home."

- Principal Danielle Lango

## Coming soon to a stage near you

Theater season is almost upon us and students and staff across the district are hard at work putting together some spectacular shows.

Here's a preview of what we have to look forward to on Hamburg stages in the coming months.

#### **Middle School** Aladdin Jr.

Jan. 26 & 27 at 7:30 p.m. and Jan. 28 at 1 p.m.

"Aladdin will be played by Lochlan Davis, Jasmine will be played by Tessa Reinagel, and the Genie will be played by Madelyn Coughlin. The full cast is comprised of over 70 students and 25 crew! It will be directed by Katherine Montante Prospero and produced by Rhonda Wieder."

- Director Rhonda Wieder

#### High School (play) Shakespeare in Love

February 2, 3, & 4 at 7:30 p.m.

"Penniless and indebted to two demanding producers, struggling young actor and playwright Will Shakespeare is tormented by writer's block, until he meets the beautiful Viola de Lesseps, daughter of a wealthy man, whose fiery passion for drama leaves her secretly longing to be an actor. She disguises herself as a man to become a player in Shakespeare's new play. But, Viola's father has promised her to marry the stuffy Lord Wessex, Under the veil of secrecy, Will and Viola's love affair becomes the basis of the very play he's writing -Romeo and Juliet."

- Director Marc Ruffino





Scan for tickets

#### **Armor**

#### 101 Dalmatians Kids

February 9 & 10 at 7 p.m.

"The musical is an adaptation of the classic 1961 animated film. It is an adventurous tale of kidnappina villains and courageous puppies. We are especially excited about the fact that the entire ensemble is featured for a majority of the show. The students at Armor cannot wait to bring it to life!"

- Director Kelly Ersing

#### **Boston Valley**

#### The Best Little Theater in Town

March 22 at 7 p.m.

"BVS prides itself on the nearly complete student-run-and-created musical we produce every year. The kids make most of the scenery, run the stage crew and lights themselves, create their own costumes, and even make many directorial/production decisions along the way. We also strive to have every single member of the 5th grade class involved in some way -I will alter the script and songs to fit the kids' interest in speaking roles and solo singing so that everyone gets a chance to "try out" in a way that's comfortable for them."

- Director Laura Biddle

#### **Charlotte Avenue**

#### **Disney's Aristocats**

March 22 & 23 at 7 p.m.

"We take a lot of pride in the process of putting on a musical here at CAS. The skills that the students learn throughout the months of practice really is what they will take with them into the future. As I often say, 'the performance is really just the icing on the cake."

- Director Jackie Gould

#### **Union Pleasant** Untitled (for now)

April 25 at 7 p.m.

"Our musical at UPES is currently being written by a group of 5th graders. This year, our student writers have set the fictional story in Washington, DC in the year 1865, weeks before the conclusion of the Civil War. The story follows a group of children on a mission to pass along secret information to end the war."

- Director Kurt Ebsary

#### **High School (musical)**

#### Seussical

April 27, 28, & 29 at 7 p.m.

"We chose this because we wanted to give as many people as possible an opportunity to participate, especially given the limitations placed on performers for the past two years. The show weaves together the various characters of the classic Dr. Seuss books and spreads the message of the importance of friendship, loyalty, family, and community. It is a great family musical with a much deeper meaning than the title might initially suggest."

- Director Norman Zogaib



Administration Building 5305 Abbott Rd. Hamburg, N.Y. 14075

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hamburgschools.org



For more information on registering students and Hamburg Central School District's Pre-Kindergarten Program, scan the QR code or visit

www.hamburgschools.org > Enrolling Students.

Registration for the 2023/2024 school year will open for PreK on January 17th and for Kindergarten on February 6th.



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SCAN ME

## Capital Project on the horizon

As you're reading this, snow is likely on the ground and it's hard to imagine warm spring days, but it will be here before you know it, and so will the groundbreaking of the capital project.

The project will be completed in three phases. Phase 1 will start as soon as the snow melts this spring. Among the upgrades will be a new Howe Field turf, updated track, new varsity baseball and softball fields, and a new bus loop and paving. This is slated to be finished by spring of 2024.

Phase 2 will follow with district-wide renovations in all buildings including bathrooms, art and music wings, and playgrounds. These are set to be finished by spring of 2026.

The final phase will start in winter of 2026. This will bring a middle school aquatic center addition, multi-purpose field, interior



renovations, and final paving of the bus loop. It's all set to be finished by fall of 2027.

You'll start to see a lot of construction in a few months, and as you can see, it is

going to last a while. But the final results will enhance our district and allow us to continue giving kids the most joyful, valuable, and connected experience possible.