



FULTON IN TOUCH

FULTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

2022 FALL NEWSLETTER



Volney Elementary School began the new school year with a simple yet powerful message: "Be You."

Principal Elizabeth Stoddard recently announced the new theme to students in the first afternoon assembly of the new year. The school gathered as the teaching staff collectively read from "Be You," a book by author and illustrator Peter H. Reynolds.

"We want everyone to feel free to be themselves and to feel welcomed and cared for," said Volney staff when asked why the

theme was chosen. "Students should know that they are safe and they belong."

"Be You" will help shape the rest of the year, with several assemblies and classroom activities planned around the phrase. The theme will help to kick off the school's Reading Madness literacy initiative and a process of individual student goal-setting. The academic year will also see the return of School Buddies, where older students pair with younger counterparts to guide them in their own learning process.

Volney's "Be You" theme pairs with other district initiatives already working to transform FCSD culture. At Volney Elementary and around the district, posters proudly declare:

"You belong here."

It is safe to speak up here."

What we do is important."

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GRB students continue the tradition of the Senior Sunrise Breakfast.



G. Ray Bodley Seniors Entered Their Final Year With A Delicious Start: *The Senior Sunrise Breakfast.*

Continuing the tradition from last year, the class of 2023 was invited to a breakfast buffet of doughnuts, fruit and breakfast pizza in early September. The event was organized by the senior class and overseen by senior class co-advisors Nick Duval and Ryan Brown. Planners had hoped the event would be a hearty welcome to the students and give them the opportunity to reconnect and prepare for the year ahead. Despite the early hour, a sizeable portion of the class was in attendance, happy for the morning treats.

Several dozen doughnuts were generously donated by Dunkin' of Fulton for the gathering.

GRB Students Can Now Pursue New Civics Graduation Pathway and Honor



Students graduating from Fulton's G. Ray Bodley High School will now be able to pursue a new graduation pathway and diploma distinction: The Seal of Civic Readiness.

The distinction is part of a new initiative supported by the NYS Department of Education, meant to empower students with a sense of agency in addressing civic issues and encourage active participation in their community. Once received, the seal acts as a formal recognition that a student has attained a high level of proficiency in terms of civic knowledge, skills, mindset and experiences.

To earn the seal, students must achieve a total of six points from a variety of projects, experiences and academic pursuits. The seal will be reflected on the student's high school transcript and diploma, and is meant to be a statement of accomplishment for future educational and career opportunities.

In Fulton, GRB seniors will be able to earn the new seal as early as this year. Current seniors will receive credit for prior work and have new opportunities in economics, participation in government, and any other advanced or elective social studies courses. Moving forward at GRB and around the state, social studies teachers will adjust their curriculum and pedagogy to target civic knowledge and engagement more specifically, placing emphasis on this achievement.

"Our plan will be fully implemented over three years," said school officials, "and include learning experiences at the junior high level and in other disciplines besides social studies."

Fulton educators see the Seal of Civic Readiness as an opportunity for teachers across disciplines to highlight the standards and learning experiences that tie directly to citizenship and every student's connection to the greater community. The emphasis on civic knowledge and participation will also make important connections to New York State's social-emotional learning benchmarks.

Next year, the GRB social studies department proposes to add a half-credit elective tutorial specifically designed for students who want to complete the civics capstone project, the most immersive path to achieve the seal.



There were lots of smiles on the first day of school at Lanigan Elementary! Let's have a great new year!

A New Year at Lanigan Elementary



Fulton Junior High School Unites Home and School through One School, One Book Family Reading Program

Fulton Junior High students brought home their very own copy of the book "Ghost" by Jason Reynolds during the first week of October and began reading it with their families. During the following three months, students and families will read the book together at home while celebrating and exploring the novel at school.

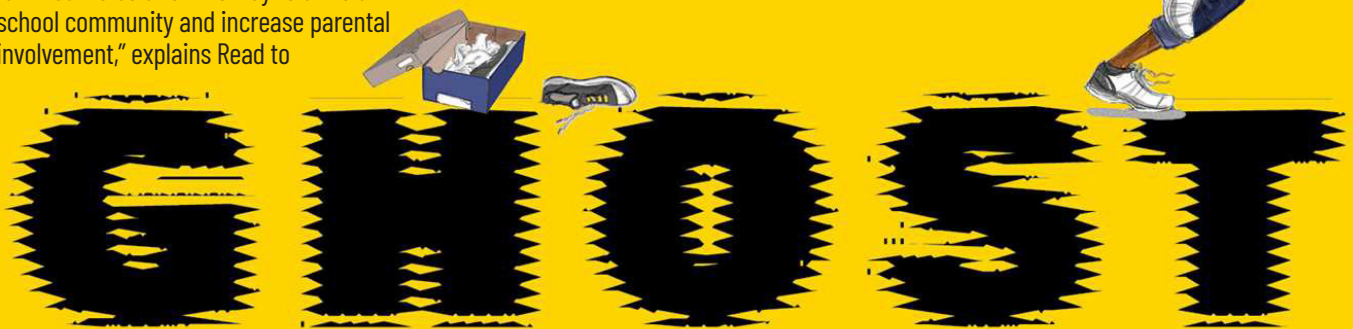
The project is part of a unique, national family literacy program called One School, One Book from nonprofit Read to Them. The campaign is designed to strengthen the educational connection between home and school. Parents of younger students may already be familiar with the program, as Fulton elementary schools participated in it with the book "Nim's Island" last spring.

"Reading a common book together turns out to be a terrific way to unite a school community and increase parental involvement," explains Read to

Them Director of Programs, Bruce Coffey. "Reading aloud at home ensures students come to school prepared to read and to succeed – in school and in life."

Families can read and discuss the book at home. In school, read alouds will happen during scheduled WIN time. Engaging activities related to the book will take place throughout the building now until holiday recess. Activities that support the book range from discussion questions in ELA to track-related geometry questions in math and even breathing exercises in science – just to name a few. Weekly trivia will take place in the library and building administrators will be sharing personal experiences they relate to the novel. The book also supports the district-wide literacy and social-emotional learning initiatives.

The mission of One School, One Book is to create a culture of literacy in every home. "The secret sauce of family literacy is to create a symbiosis between home and school," explains Coffey. "When students see their book being read and shared and discussed at home and school, they are surrounded by the culture of literacy."



RUNNING FOR HIS LIFE, OR FROM IT?

Ghost by Jason Reynolds
A National Book Award Finalist for Young People's Literature.

Volney and Lanigan Schools Host Open-Air Open Houses

With the new year in full swing, Volney and Lanigan elementary schools opened their campuses to families Sept. 20 for their first open houses.

Stylized as "block parties," the events engaged students, parents and friends outside the buildings as much as inside. While traditional tours through each school still took place, essential community-building was occurring on the lawns and sidewalks. Both schools offered hot dog dinners to visitors – served by Volney and Lanigan staff – while several community and district organizations connected with families at tables outside. Organizations like the Fulton Fire Department, the Girl Scouts, the Boy Scouts, dance schools, athletics teams, and the CNY Arts Center were all in attendance at the schools, offering opportunities and resources to Fulton's youth. At Volney, it was also a night to showcase the Book Fair in the cafetorium. Both events were well-attended.



Lanigan Elementary's fall open house was well-attended by hundreds of students and families.

Fulton's Granby Elementary Hosts Fun-Filled Open House



Granby Elementary fourth-grader Layla Henderson gets her face painted by Willow Dumas, a high school volunteer at this year's Granby open house.

Granby Elementary added a unique twist of fun family activities to this year's fall open house.

On Sept. 27, the school opened its doors to hundreds of students and families. While visitors were welcomed by traditional open house activities like tours of the building and conversations with educators and administrators, new surprises added an almost carnival-like atmosphere. The evening included hot dog meals served by staff members, face-painting, photo backdrops, a book fair and even a sizable inflatable bounce house. Excited students were eager to join the fun and show off their classrooms and teachers.



FULTON FOCUS ON

NEW DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL NUTRITION

CHRISTINA SCHIRTZ

What brings you to FCSD?

I am a Fulton alumna. After graduating, I attended SUNY Oswego where I earned a degree in business administration. My eclectic background includes more than 20 years in the hospitality industry, over 10 years of substitute teaching in Fulton, and several years in retail. This position is a perfect blend of my education and professional experiences.

What are your responsibilities as Director of School Nutrition?

My responsibility is to oversee all aspects of school nutrition and food service in all schools. I administer the school breakfast and lunch programs in accordance with state and federal policies and regulations. I also implement a district-wide food service program that focuses on nutritional integrity, product quality and happy kiddos.

What are your interests outside of your career?

Outside of work, I devote my time to my family. This time of year, you can find me on the sidelines of the soccer field cheering on my oldest son or on the soccer field coaching my youngest son. On Sundays, I'm sitting next to my husband, watching football and eating game day snacks.

What are you most looking forward to in working at FCSD?

Being creative. I love developing a menu for students. Small changes can have a huge impact.

What impact do you hope to have at FCSD?

I hope to have a positive impact on students' perception of school lunches. My goal is to offer meals that students love; I want them to be excited about what they're eating. I want them to know that I have their best interests at heart, and I have a great team who supports my creativity.



"You belong here. It is safe to speak up here. What we do is important."

Science teacher Shanna Severance tosses egg drop projects from the roof of G. Ray Bodley, concluding a cooperative earth science project.



An Exciting New Project Drops by GRB

Visitors to G. Ray Bodley's Fall open house likely caught sight of something unexpected: Earth science teacher Shana Severance throwing students' projects off the roof of the school. Fortunately, this was all part of an elaborate "egg drop" project intended to get students thinking outside the box and learning and working together.

In her high school earth science classes, Severance asked students to formulate a model, plan it, and construct a device to save the egg from breaking as it fell. Each project had to be completed within a given budget; supplies were assigned a "monetary" value in order to be used. Students could critique one another's work and revise as necessary. The toss off the roof was merely the grand finale, serving as the last test of each device's ability to protect the fragile eggs inside.

This was the first year of the activity, which aligned with both science and engineering objectives under the Next Generation Science Standards. "With the positive feedback," Severance said after the drop, "I am thinking it will be an every-year project."

Of the dozens of drops, Severance was proud to report only one casualty for the evening and is already hatching ideas for next year. Future years could see even more elaborate and tech-savvy tests, incorporating drops from drones and live video feeds. Students enjoyed the project and many attended the open house simply to catch a glimpse of their hard work in freefall.



First Day at Fairgrieve Elementary

Fairgrieve Elementary students and staff were excited to head back to school this September. Take a peek into the first day of the 2022-2023 school year!





Fulton City School District

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Postal Customer

From the Desk of the Superintendent



BRIAN T. PULVINO,
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Dear FCSD Families & Community Members,

I hope this communication finds you and your family well. Thank you for the continued honor and privilege to serve the families, students, staff, and the community of Fulton. A new school year brings new opportunities, renewed energy, and endless possibilities for

success in teaching and learning. Feedback on the start to our 2022-23 school year has been extremely positive, and now we have to build on that solid foundation!

I want to extend my appreciation for the hard work and dedication of all stakeholders to ensure our district continues to strive to provide a wide range of academic and extracurricular opportunities along with vital social-emotional support for every student. Our work continues to be guided by the Fulton City School District's Vision and Mission:

Vision: Our vision is to create a learning organization that is the centerpiece of the community, where all are welcomed and held to standards of excellence that foster hope and resilience for the future.

Mission: The Fulton School Community will empower students to develop the knowledge and skills to become respectful, responsible, productive citizens who are committed to lifelong learning.

Our FCSD Strategic Coherence Plan centers on people individually and collectively sharing understanding of what it takes to ensure a high-performing school district. Group performance depends on behavior that communicates one powerful overarching idea: We are safe and connected. Our theme and focus this year involves every FCSD stakeholder:

You belong here.

It is safe to speak up here.

What we do is important.

Coming together, valuing one another, being innovative problem solvers and taking risks together are essential in our world today. We look forward to working with you as we strive to meet the needs of every child every day.

In addition to our focus on learning and social-emotional wellness, being good stewards of our physical resources is critical. Capital improvement projects have continued into the fall. Track and turf installation was finally completed after some delays related to availability of materials and resources. HVAC installation is also complete for the small gym at the high school. Plans for the final phase involving work at Granby Elementary School are at the bid stage. The scope of this work will include sidewalks, parking lots, pool entry and pool ventilation. These improvements will result in safer, more accessible schools where our students can learn and our community can gather.

Wishing you and your families a wonderful year!

Respectfully,

Brian T. Pulvino
Superintendent of Schools