



Tiger TRADITIONS

Inspiring Excellence and Leadership in All!

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School-Based Health Center at Mex El ready to serve



School officials, dignitaries and media came together to officially cut the ribbon on what MACS Superintendent Dr. Donna Runner says is a big win for student health, mental and dental care in the district.

With parental permission, students can receive services such as primary medical care, dental/oral health care, counseling and more. The health center can also treat students for acute illnesses such as the flu and chronic conditions such as allergies, asthma and diabetes.

The School-Based Health Center (SBHC), operated in conjunction with ConnexCare, is located in Mexico Elementary School and serves students in that school along with those from neighboring Mexico High School. It is the second SBHC for Mexico Academy & Central School District along with one already established inside Mexico Middle School.

"We are incredibly lucky to be able to offer these services which will help improve the overall health and safety of our students, which is always our number one concern," said Dr. Runner. "It brings access to reliable, top-notch services even closer, and serves as another option for families on a number of fronts."

A number of ConnexCare and MACS officials officially opened the SBHC with a ribbon-cutting ceremony in mid-December. Dr. Runner thanked all those involved with the project for their hard work and dedication to turn the years-long vision into a reality.

Mexico Elementary and Mexico High School families can complete the enrollment process for their student(s) via the nearby QR code or visiting: forms.mypudox.com/#/form/76161

High school students being enrolled should select Mexico Elementary as their enrollment site.

The Middle School School-Based Health Center is also accepting enrollment for students, particularly those who just entered the fifth grade.

They may also follow the link to register.

Those with any questions can call 315-298-1903.



Mexico HS inducts 66th National Honor Society class

A dozen new students were welcomed into the Mexico Academy & Central School District's National Honor Society during its 66th annual Rite of Induction in late November.

National Honor Society (NHS) recognizes students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of character, scholarship, leadership and service, collectively referred to as the "four pillars" of NHS.

Superintendent Dr. Donna Runner and Mexico High School Principal James Busco both spoke briefly during the Nov. 22 ceremony, offering congratulations to the inductees and encouraging all to continue being shining examples of citizens and community members.

The MACS chapter, known as Los Inteligentes, formally honored and inducted Erin Cadrette, Tucker Donath, Emma Lawler, Harmony Schroeder, Alexa

von Holtz, Autumn Parkhurst, Evan Caroccio, Adria Ariola, Sage Clement, Avery Oakes, Anna Trimble and Alexander Gayne.

NHS adviser and high school teacher Joseph Deckman was the master of ceremonies and read a few accolades from each student as they were officially inducted in front of an audience of family and friends.

Current Mexico High School NHS members include Mackenzie Craig, Lauren Salisbury, Morgan Eastman, Carolyn Zedack, Ayden Jensen, Alecsis Buda, Victoria Criss, Kendall Cuyler and Abigail Hinman.

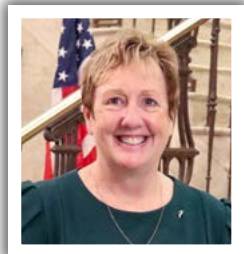
The new members joined those already in NHS to give back the very next day as the society volunteered its time during a Red Cross blood drive in Mexico High School that saw dozens of donations.



Pictured just prior to this year's National Honor Society induction ceremony are new inductees (at top of photo), members previously inducted and in good standing (in the blue ceremonial robes), Mexico High School Principal James Busco (bottom left) and NHS Adviser Joseph Deckman (bottom right). MACS inducted 12 new members into its prestigious honor society that prides itself in success in the classroom and in the community.

A message from the Superintendent

Dear MACS School Family and Community,



This is my anniversary month . . . one year since you offered me the opportunity to serve as Superintendent of Schools in Mexico! I am grateful for every moment and love being part of this community. Thank you for your ongoing support.

We continue to navigate this pandemic together, agreeing or disagreeing on some of the mitigation protocols, yet successfully started with five days

per week of in-person instruction in September. While challenging, our staff and scholars have operated within the required safety parameters and adjusted to being back in school on a regular basis.

We are working diligently to follow our curriculum expectations and eliminate any learning gaps that occurred due to the less-than-ideal way we had to deliver instruction during the first year of COVID-19. Our teachers are focused and collaborating on how best to improve student outcomes. I have full confidence in their ability to deliver high-quality instruction as they seek to deepen their pedagogy. Our clubs, sports and fine arts opportunities are fully operational, which gives many of our students a feeling akin to normalcy. I am not sure what our new

normal will be in the coming months and years, but I do know that our community is strong and capable of handling whatever comes our way.

Partnering with ConnexCare, we opened our second Health Center to serve students at Mexico Elementary and Mexico High School. Please see the story in this newsletter for more information and a link to register any student in Mexico Elementary, Mexico Middle or Mexico High schools.

With our approved stimulus funds, we were able to hire an additional nurse to support the district as well as a COVID coordinator to handle the necessary contact tracing. We replaced the air handler and a gas line at Mexico Elementary and are looking to offer a robust summer program to our students. When the second approval is granted, we will seek to offer more supports for our struggling students along with enrichment opportunities for those who are ready for the challenge.

Mexico is a great place to live and learn! I wish you and those you love a joyous holiday season.

Sincerely,

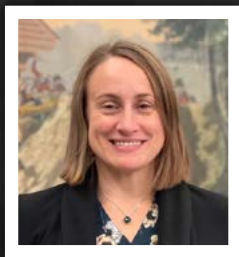
Donna Runner

Dr. Donna Runner
Superintendent of Schools

Mexico Middle School presents... Matilda The Musical Jr.



Longtime MACS teacher Scales named new assistant principal



A longtime science teacher at Mexico High School has made the transition to the school's new assistant principal with administrators praising her character, leadership ability and drive to make students better learners and people.

Christina Scales, who was in the midst of her 14th year as a teacher at Mexico Academy and

Central School District, officially made the transition to assistant principal at the beginning of November.

"We are so excited to have Chrissy in this new role," said MACS Superintendent Dr. Donna Runner. "She's someone who is highly devoted to Mexico schools as evidenced by her longevity and who exudes leadership qualities. She will continue to positively impact students, help them grow and, in her new position, will help them find success."

Scales spoke very highly of the educational and learning environment at Mexico schools, noting the compassionate and enthusiastic staff who do everything they can to help students.

"One thing is very clear to me about MACS – the people in this district truly care about students' education and well-being," said Scales. "They are willing to go the extra mile to support students and to create meaningful experiences for them. We have programs here that support the entire child and I am honored to be a part of such a caring community."

Scales graduated from Oriskany Junior-Senior High School before earning a bachelor's degree in biology from Gordon College in Massachusetts and then worked as a medical technologist. She chose to pursue a master's degree with a biology 7-12 certification and worked as a kitchen manager in a convenience store while at school.

Her first teaching job was as a long-term substitute at Mexico High School and she has been a teacher ever since. In 2019, Scales was accepted into the state's Master Teacher Program.

In addition to 14 years as a science teacher, she has worked as the science department coordinator and STREAM club advisor – two areas Scales said she is extremely proud of.

"Both of these positions have allowed me to support students in learning and reaching their fullest potential by either supporting high-quality, data-driven instruction or by facilitating opportunities and connections for students in the sciences," said Scales.

Scales thanked the Board of Education, her colleagues and the administration for years of support and mentorship along her journey. She specifically thanked James Busco, who most recently occupied the assistant principal's post for years until being named the principal earlier this school year, for his constant guidance and help.

"I am so grateful for the opportunity to continue this journey under his leadership," said Scales.

Mexico senior sets football record in first season

Senior Jacob Hill had always wanted to play football but never acted on it until just days before the Mexico Tigers preseason training began in August. He was unsure but didn't want to regret not trying, and he ultimately broke a program record in his historic season.

Hill, who lives a couple houses down the road from football head coach and Mexico Middle School math teacher Tee Murabito, asked about joining the team and focused his attention on becoming the placekicker for the field goal and kickoff units.

Over the weekend, Hill worked with a tee, and on the first day of practice he showed the ability to drill extra-point field goals with extra distance to spare, Murabito said.

Hill was named the team's kicker and went on to nail 36-of-39 extra-point attempts, blowing away the team's previous record for extra-points made by more than 10. His 92.3% accuracy was noteworthy, but so was Hill's work ethic and positive attitude.

"I'm really glad he came out and gave it a try," Murabito said. "He was a great kicker for us, understood his position really well, but more than that, he made every single practice and was a great role model for the younger guys on the team. We really appreciate everything he brought day in and day out."

The Tigers also saw success on the gridiron as a team, winning the Section III Independent League championship with a 7-1 overall record that included 7-0 in league play. Mexico won the title on its own turf, defeating county rival Pulaski 24-7 in the final.

In addition to success on the field, Hill excels in the classroom at Mexico High School and the Tigers decided to name him the team's nominee for the National Football Foundation College Hall of Fame.

While assisting in the application process Murabito, ever the math teacher, ran the numbers on Hill's weighted grade point average and he let out a laugh when it came out to the exact same as his extra-point percentage – 92.3%.

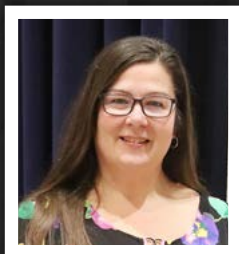
"I kind of chuckled and went 'You've got to be kidding me,'" said Murabito of the serendipitous moment.

But overall, Murabito says Hill's story is one that might resonate with students around the county who have always been on the fence about trying that sport or club.

"At the end of the day, Jacob knows he won't have any regrets and when he looks back someday 50 years down the road, he will have a story to tell," said Murabito. "It never hurts to give it a try."



Proud to be MACS



Jennifer Spaulding, November 2021

Having proudly served the district for 29 years to the month, Mexico High School principal's secretary Jennifer Spaulding was named the Proud to be MACS recipient for November 2021 by the Board of Education.

Jenni, a 1989 alumna who grew up in nearby New Haven, earned her account clerk certification after graduation and began working for the Oswego County Department of Social Services.

Jenni joined the MACS family in November 1992 at the Mexico Middle School working for Principal John Ruf. She never looked back and is now in her 30th year with the district. Jenni moved to the high school in November 2008 to work for Assistant Principal Christine Plath.

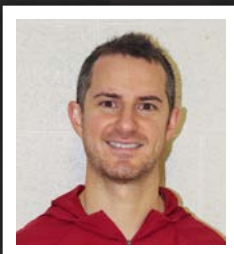
Along the way, Jenni married Eric and they had two children, Nathan and Katelynn, who both attended Mexico schools through graduation. Jenni's children represent the fourth generation of MACS graduates that started with Jenni's grandmother, Mildred Robinson Murray '52.

Jenni moved to the principal's office in 2010 and the principal then was Don Root, who recently served as interim assistant principal at the high school.

Root said Jenni kept the high school highly organized and former principal Ryan Lanigan applauded her "stellar work ethic and a passion for helping our staff, students, families" and the principal.

Current Principal James Busco echoed those sentiments and added that Mexico High School would not be the same without Jenni throughout all these years.

When asked about her favorite part of the job, Jenni said she loves working with the students and staff to make her alma mater the best that it can be.



Dominick Anthony, December 2021

The Board of Education honored high school physical education teacher and varsity girls' basketball coach Dominick Anthony as its Proud to be MACS recipient for December 2021.

Dominick grew up in the North Syracuse area and graduated from Cicero-North Syracuse High School in 2002.

After graduation, Dominick attended Herkimer Community College before transferring to SUNY Brockport where he received his bachelor's degree in physical education. He then earned his master's degree in adaptive physical education from SUNY Cortland.

When asked why he chose physical education, Dominick says he has always enjoyed physical activity beginning as a youth when he played soccer, basketball and lacrosse.

After college, Dominick would substitute and coach for Liverpool schools before joining MACS in 2010. In his first five years, he split time between the physical education department while working as a teaching assistant at Mexico Elementary, Mexico Middle and Mexico High schools.

When the longtime, well-known Ron Jardin retired from his physical education instructor post at New Haven in 2015, Dominick stepped in and has lived up to the strong reputation of his predecessor. He remained at New Haven until this year when he returned to the high school.

In addition to instructing, Dominick has served as a coach for modified boys' soccer, JV girls' lacrosse and JV and varsity girls' basketball teams. His 2020 Tigers varsity girls' basketball team went undefeated at 10-0.

Along the way, Dominick married Molly, a math teacher in the Jamesville-DeWitt district, and had two daughters named Grace and Taylor.

"I have heard consistent feedback that students already feel that Mr. Anthony is making personal connections with them and listening to their ideas and feedback about how to make PE an enjoyable and beneficial experience," writes nominator Shannon Bigelow. "His presence at the high school is a huge plus for our students!"

MACS Athletic Hall of Fame



More than a half dozen honorees and a historic Tiger team were inducted into the MACS Athletic Hall of Fame during a recent ceremony.

This year's athlete inductees included Everet Backus ('49), Mark Backus ('72), Joseph Tagliareni ('72), Evan Oustrich ('09) and Shawn Parkhurst ('09). Also inducted were Sue Teifke ('81) as a special contributor, William Kays as a coach who led the varsity wrestling program for 27 years and the Tigers 2008-09 varsity boys swim team.

The swim team was coached by John O'Brien, previously inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame, and Sally Oliver who still coaches the boys and girls divers today. Team members included Ian Dineen, Rich Delong, Zach Earl, Dan Fischer, Andy Grant, Andrew Halsey, Chris Halsey, Tom Hartnett, Mike Hartwell, Dan Jardin, Logan Killian, Josh Lucas, Shawn Parkhurst, Nick Rodriguez, Josh Russo, Jon Silva, Brian Smith, Colton Taylor, Mike Vogelsang, Brandon Warren, Cody Warren and Kevin Wozniak.

Festive pumpkins in Palermo

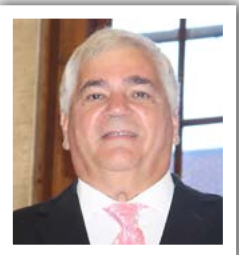


Happy Halloween from Mexico Elementary



Students from Mexico Elementary School are pictured during their parade route, which wrapped around a block in the village of Mexico ahead of Halloween. Parents, families and community members lined the sidewalks to see all of the students from kindergarten through fourth grade decked out in their spooky garb.

Longtime MACS leader Busco named MHS principal



A familiar face at Mexico High School has been chosen to lead the historic institution as principal after 18 years with the district.

James Busco, who most recently served as the high school's assistant principal for 11 years, was announced as the principal just before school started. He had been the interim MHS principal since the start of summer vacation.

Mexico Academy & Central School District Superintendent

Dr. Donna Runner said she is thrilled to have Busco lead the high school, which educates grades nine through 12, or roughly 600 students.

"Mr. Busco has supported the MACS family for many years and is an integral part of our success," said Runner. "We are proud that he will now be leading the high school."

During his 18 years working at MACS, Busco was a special education teacher between the high and middle schools for six years, an administrative intern for one year and assistant principal in the high school for 11 years.

Busco earned his bachelor's degree from Cornell University's School of Hotel Management, a master's degree in special education and elementary education from Le Moyne College and a certificate of advanced study from SUNY Cortland.

He is also a central New York native, as Busco was born in Liverpool and still resides there today. He graduated from the Liverpool Central School District.

When asked about his new role, Busco thanked the Board of Education and superintendent for their trust and said he was very excited to be working with the "amazing staff" at Mexico High School.

Despite the lingering pandemic as school opened, Busco remained confident the learning community will persevere.

"We are still facing the effects of the pandemic, but we are going to get through this," he said. "Don't forget that tough times don't last, but tough people do. The staff will be there to help the students through these tough times."

MISSION:

Educate and motivate our students to be successful, responsible citizens.

VISION:

Recognized as a school district that inspires excellence and leadership in all!

CORE BELIEFS:

- We put students first.
- All students can learn.
- We provide a safe, secure environment for all.
- Collaboration among students, staff, families and the community is essential to our success.
- Our schools are the heart of the community.
- We value creativity and innovation.
- We lead with honesty and integrity.
- Our supportive and rigorous learning environment nurtures the whole child.
- All are treated with dignity, respect and compassion.

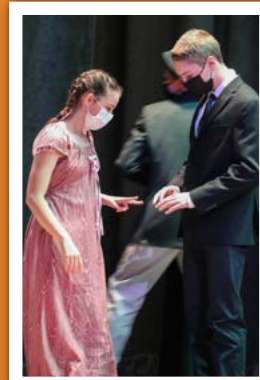
Mexico fall play 'Anne of Green Gables'

The Mexico Drama Club staged "Anne of Green Gables" in early November as its fall production.

The play comes from L.M. Montgomery's classic tale of Anne Shirley, a red-headed orphan girl that brings unexpected adventure into the lives of her adopted family through her curiosity and imagination.

The students involved in the production included Abigayle Trani (as Anne Shirley), Colin O'Neill (Matthew Cuthbert), Lauren Salisbury (Marilla Cuthbert), Mallory Mills (Rachel Lynde), Thi Huynh (Diana Barry), Amber Whalen (Mrs. Barry/Carrie Sloane), Sarah Brooks (Minnie May Berry), Amy Gilbert (Josie Pye/Miss Susan Stacy), Cali Hopp (ruby Gillis), Hunter Halsey (Moody Macpherson), Harmony Schroeder (Jane Andrews), Ethan Stevens (Gilbert Blythe), Tristan Breckenridge (Stationmaster/Mr. Phillips/Jerry Boute/Rev. Allan), Brayden Scott (Mr. Sandler/Charlie Sloane), Kieran Henderson (Rev. Bentley/Jimmy Glover/Pres. of Queen's Academy), Mara Macomber (Mrs. Blewett/Tillie Boulter), Alayna Walker (Prissy Andrews/Aunt Josephine Barry), Rosie Hawkins (Miss Rogerson/Bessie Wright) and Julianna Ricker (Mary Jo/Mrs. Allan).

Adrianna Barr assisted with backstage work, Aiden DeGroff worked on sound tech and Logan Wilder helped with lighting tech. The play was directed by high school teaching assistant and MACS alumna Cassie Story.



MS students utilize STEM skills, creativity to best ModiFri challenge

Mexico Middle School students had to think critically and explore the creative process while assembling battery-powered cars and planes without any assistance from teachers.

Students in grades five and six just before the Thanksgiving holiday spent two hours meticulously constructing and testing their motorized vehicles which required critical thinking, putting together small parts and a lot of tinkering. The experience is titled ModiFri and is described as a video-guided STEM experience.

"It was great," said Mexico Middle School Principal Kimberly Holliday. "There was definitely a lot of frustration, anger, maybe even some tears but to see them overcome those challenges and their ultimate joy in figuring it out was amazing. I think the kids had a lot of fun with it."

Students worked at their desks and struggled together, offering one another tips and an avenue to laugh off any frustrations. Teachers were allowed only to ask questions and could not assist the builders in any way.

Students tested their two vehicles in the hallway and were challenged to modify both projects into one without instructions.

Fifth-grade students from Mexico Middle School take part in the ModiFri challenge by constructing battery-powered vehicles during the event.



New Haven Elementary gives thanks

Students and staff alike were showing their gratitude just ahead of Thanksgiving.

Throughout the day, different members of the New Haven Elementary School were asked what they are grateful for this year.

Scan the nearby QR code to view the video on the MACS or visit Facebook.com/MACSPride.



Fire Safety at New Haven



Members of the New Haven Volunteer Fire Department greeted students at New Haven Elementary School one morning in their firefighting gear, offering free pencils to learners as they entered the building. The event kicked off Fire Prevention Week, when students learned about how to stay safe and prevent fires in the home.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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Follow us on our new Instagram page for photos and videos from schools and events: @macs_pride

Middle School, High School bands combine for fall concert under the lights

