

Frontier

NEWSLETTER FOR FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY

WINTER 2020



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Students design and engineer an adaptive vehicle for local 3 year old with a disability.

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March 28

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Message from the Superintendent



Pathways to Graduation Provide Choices



The school year is flying by as we have our sights set on spring. During this time of year, the focus turns to the Governor's budget proposal, the not so distant Regents exams and ultimately graduation. In the middle of all this, our Falcons are thinking about what the next year and beyond might hold for them as we start course selections, especially in our middle and high school.

In my last newsletter message, I mentioned how STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) had become a prevalent theme in our ThoughtExchange surveys and curriculum work happening throughout the

district. STEAM, and the connection to real-world problems and skill development provides an interdisciplinary focus for our Falcons to explore their interests while learning the skills necessary to be successful in our ever-changing economy. The powers that be in Albany have also realized that schools need more options for students to graduate with the skills to take advantage of the jobs of today and those jobs yet to be created.

Like many of you, we only had two options in High School: a local diploma track or a Regents diploma track. Too often, this choice was made for us in Middle School, long before we really had any idea of what that meant. That has changed considerably. Now, most students graduate with a Regents diploma that offers different options to achieve. Students still need to successfully complete 22 credits and pass a Regents exam in English, Math, Science and Social Studies but also have a choice. Now our Falcons can choose the diploma pathway that best fits them, including the Arts, Biliteracy, Career and Technical (CTE), Humanities or STEM. An Advanced Regents diploma takes that further by requiring our Falcons to complete eight Regents exams or seven with a diploma pathway. In addition, they must choose one of three options including, two additional credits in LOTE, a five-unit sequence in the Arts or CTE. The idea is for the pathway to graduation to not be the same recipe, so students have options based on their interests and strengths. At Frontier, we are now going to take that one step further.

Starting with the 2020-21 school year, Frontier will offer Learning Pathways in particular common areas. The first is an Engineering-Innovation Pathway where our Falcons can dive into everything from design to making ideas come to life. The second is a Business-Entrepreneurial Pathway with the focus not only on the finance world but how to create a business or bring a product to life. The final addition for next year is a Computer Science Pathway. Our top-notch teachers and administrators have been working with Hilbert College to greatly expand our offering of dual enrollment courses and the likes of Amazon in order to provide our Falcons with a leg up in the ever-expanding field. Whether it's programming, coding or cybersecurity, the possibilities are endless. These are the first three we are rolling out with ideas to possibly expand including pathways in Health Sciences, Performing Arts, and Future Educator.

Ultimately, the ideas come from all of you through conversations and surveys, so please share your thoughts. Please be on the watch for more information as it relates to diploma requirements and Learning Pathways on our website. Frontier is already a wonderful place to be and we will continue "Working Together for Excellence" to provide our Falcons with an education amongst the best in the area.

Yours in Blue,

Richard J. Hughes, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

*"Working Together
for Excellence"*

GoBabyGo!

Students Design Adaptive Vehicle for WNY Child With Disability

Sometimes the stars align to pair people in need with those who can help. That is exactly what happened in the case of the new GoBabyGo! Frontier Chapter.

The nonprofit, GoBabyGo!, was founded by a professor of physical therapy at the University of Delaware to give children with lesser abilities the freedom of mobility through more affordable and child-friendly Power Wheels. The initiative has swept the world and found a home at Frontier High School and Big Tree Elementary.

Co-advised by teachers Elaine Turner and Nicole Beyette, Frontier's group is unique in that the volunteers are a mixed-age group of three high school students and three elementary students.

The team of six was selected through a competitive process and all members have worked together to adapt a Fisher-Price Power Wheels Jeep for two-and-a-half-year-old Gillie Mae Tallant of Eden. Gillie has Angelman Syndrome, which affects her ability to walk.



GoBabyGo! students interact with Gillie Mae Tallant during her visit to Big Tree Elementary.

The Power Wheels Jeep was donated by Fisher-Price Senior Manager of Design Gary Collins, who along with Big Tree's Physical Therapist Samantha Panfil and Occupational Therapist Deb Ross is also mentoring the team. Mr. Collins also arranged for the students to meet with Fisher-Price's engineers to get feedback on their adaptive design.

"It's about kids helping kids, it's about STEAM education, it's about community outreach. The students have collected donations for this project and have gone outside our district to help a child in need. They have really thought about this little girl. They researched her disability, her interests and have tried to design a vehicle to help with all of that," Mrs. Turner added.

The students anxiously awaited meeting Gillie and her parents, Erin and Mike, in person. When the day finally came, they were able to learn more about her likes, abilities, connection to her brother Cashton and more ways to improve their design. The finished product will be presented to Gillie and her family on April 4 at the Festival of the Arts.

"Seeing the dedication, empathy and collaboration in this group, I hope this can grow beyond our one team to having a chapter in each of our schools. It is truly a unique, rewarding experience for all involved," Mrs. Turner said.



Pictured standing are Ethan Hacic, Emily Ohnmeiss, Sarah Guishard, Emma Bartoe and Mr. Tallant holding Gillie Mae. Sitting are Anna Palmowski, Peyton Ring and Mrs. Tallant.

"She can't use a Power Wheels vehicle from the box," Mrs. Turner explained. "She needs support for her head, neck and hips. She also is not able to use the foot controls, so those need to be moved to the steering wheel where she can operate them with her hands."



Stay up to date on school news throughout the year on www.frontiercsd.org, the Frontier Central Schools App (Google Play and Apple Store), [Facebook.com/FrontierCSD.org](https://www.facebook.com/FrontierCSD.org) and [Twitter @DrRichardHughes](https://twitter.com/DrRichardHughes)

60 Minutes of Personalized Learning

Big Tree Pilots New Intervention and Enrichment Program

Every student's needs are different. This year, kindergarten and third grade students at Big Tree Elementary are taking part in an hour of personalized supports each day to assist in their learning.

From lessons in mindfulness, articulation in speech club and other learning skills, students in both general education and special education classes are involved in lessons planned with speech therapists, reading specialists, special education and general education teachers, a math specialist, social worker, and teacher assistant.

According to reading specialist Jacqueline Gow, "As a specialist it's a huge shift from what we used to do to what we're doing now because if you talk about how many children are involved in the intervention blocks, the answer is everyone. All the kids are in some type of small group intervention, enrichment or acceleration based on their level of learning." During the hour, every child is getting something they need.

These staff members have provided students with multi-tiered support systems in the past, however the number of students receiving the supports was limited and usually performed in isolation. This new model allows specialists to push into a whole classroom, assist with small groups as well as the traditional pull out instruction, depending on students' needs.

Around a quarter of each grade level is engaged in enrichment or accelerated groups at different times, allowing them to explore units in the new STEAM Lab.

In order to measure students' needs, administrators and teachers turned to tools they were already using, such as iReady, AIMS WEB, and Interim Assessments. Every six weeks, teachers meet to assess students' growth based on data collected by each grade level.



Dylan Stellrecht uses Lexia on a tablet during intervention and enrichment hour.

"As specialists are regularly pushing into classrooms, they are noticing more students who may benefit from the different supports. Students can shift groups fluidly and do not have to wait for the traditional benchmarking periods," Principal Julia Bermingham explained.

The grade level teams are also utilizing the data to determine which interventions were the most effective. The teachers are excited by the results they have seen in students.

"In kindergarten, we recognized some of the kids needed help with social emotional learning, so we tied in with Mrs. Beall to take some kids for that and within the classroom we do a lot of role playing and game playing and things like that to gain social skills. Because they have more time to work on those skill sets, we have seen a lot less behavior issues," kindergarten teacher Jayne Osmanski said.



Ava Shea and Lucas Czora sort consonants and vowels.

Teachers and administrators hope to see the program expand next year following this year's pilot. Teachers in first grade are currently participating in professional development so they can be ready for the intervention block next year.



Kids Helping Kids

Blasdell Elementary Fosters Relationship with The Teacher's Desk

Students use a pencil to write a story, markers to create a piece of art or a glue stick to finish a project. The Teacher's Desk is a local nonprofit making sure students and their teachers have the supplies they need to succeed.

At Blasdell Elementary, students have carried on the legacy of helping other students. Fifth grade teacher Nick Penberthy brought his connection with The Teacher's Desk to Blasdell when he was an advisor to the service club three years ago.

"It's a great place to volunteer. Even after my brother and I were out of school, my mom, Robin, continued to volunteer there two to three times a week," Mr. Penberthy explained. "It's also a nice fit for students because it allows kids to give back to kids. When the service club would pack supplies, we would put a sticker on the back saying, 'Packed with love by fourth and fifth graders at Blasdell Elementary.'"

This year he had planned to involve his boys varsity volleyball players in assembling Pancho Packs, when his mother passed away suddenly in September. She was involved in packing some of the 10,500 backpacks donated in Bills superfan Pancho Billa's memory. As a tribute to her, The Teacher's Desk founder, John Mika, surprised Blasdell Elementary with the final 500 Pancho Packs in December.

Boxes brimming with black and blue backpacks were handed out during the Christmas Beehive Assembly.

"The partnership with Blasdell Elementary School started with Robin and we hope it lasts a long time," Mr. Mika said.

In February, 20 teachers and administrators volunteered with The Teacher's Desk as a thank you. Mr. Penberthy also coaches modified baseball and plans to continue to get his students involved, whether in the classroom, on the court or the field.

FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

Saturday, April 4, 2020 • 11AM - 2PM

Frontier High School

- K-12 artwork
- Hands-on activities
- Food trucks
- Proceeds benefit our scholarship fund



▲ Blasdell Elementary's Student Government sponsored a fundraiser, Pennies for Patients, to benefit the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Western New York. Pictured are students who donated 25 cents to "White Out Cancer" by dressing in as much white as possible.



▲ Lily Nero, Finn Ferguson and Haleigh Frankowski explore the Earth using AR Globes during Cloverbank Elementary's Second Annual STEAM Day. The day was filled with experiments and stations exploring many topics ranging from Science to the Arts.

- ▶ Hour of Code is an introduction to computer science, designated to demystify "code" to show that anyone can learn the basics and to broaden participation in the field of computer science. These second graders are using a coding link from the Pinehurst Library web page.
- ▼ Big Tree Elementary School performed its winter concert on January 15. Students played their instruments and sang beautifully. They also donned shirts with orange hearts in memory of Luca Calanni, a Pinehurst student who passed away.



- ▼ To recognize the amazing efforts of Frontier Middle School's Goin' Bald for Bucks fundraising, Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center's Herd for Hope recognized the school with a large blue buffalo during an assembly in November. The next Goin' Bald for Bucks is coming up on April 24.



◀ The Falcon Vault opened at Frontier High School on February 3 in cooperation with Financial Trust Federal Credit Union. The goal of the student-run branch partnership is to further students' understanding of and the experience with real-world money management. Pictured are Danielle DuBois from FTCU, Emily Weise, Ken Pirone and Tyler Kirkwood.



Look Down

Sensory Path Puts Learning in Motion

Walking the halls of an elementary school, you expect to see walls covered in student artwork or colorful decorations, but looking down, you probably only expect to see tile under your feet. At Cloverbank Elementary, and a few other Frontier schools, however, the floors are making the kids jump, tiptoe and even do math problems.

New this year to Cloverbank are bright and colorful Sensory Paths, selected and installed by Physical Therapist Samantha Panfil and Occupational Therapist Justine McQuillen. Made up of letters, numbers, colors and instructions, they offer teachers the option to work on material or to simply get the kids moving throughout the day.

“Research has shown that movement throughout the school day helps to improve focus and attention, while improving positive behaviors in the classroom. These sensory paths allow for a more structured movement experience that can be used individually or as a whole class during scheduled breaks or incorporated into transitions throughout the school,” Mrs. Panfil explained.

The sensory paths at Big Tree, Blasdell, and Cloverbank were each designed to incorporate activities for addressing strengthening, coordination, body awareness, and balance with components to help students to calm, focus and regulate their bodies to be ready for learning.

Teachers have found other ways to use the Sensory Path as well. Julie Zdyb, Cloverbank’s math specialist, uses the Sensory Path to add movement to number activities.



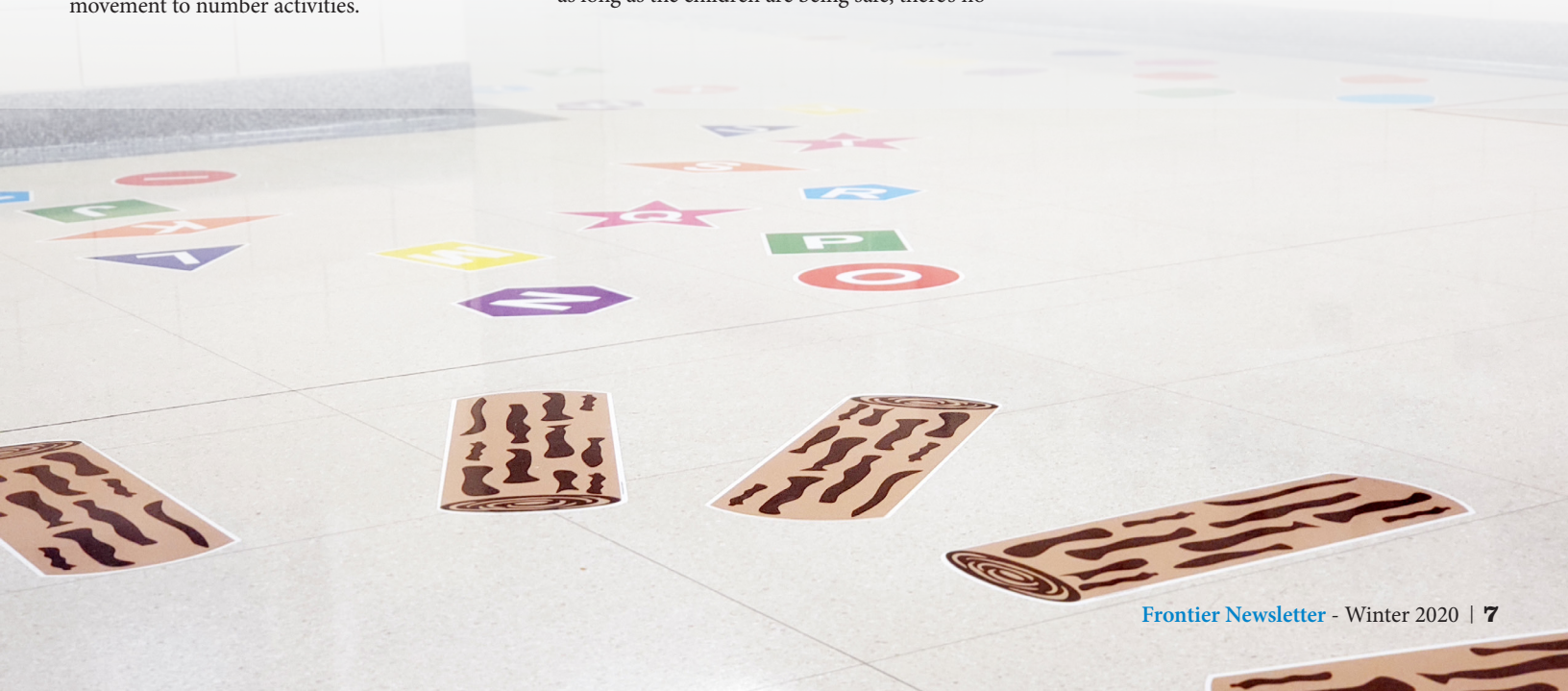
Mrs. Panfil and Mrs. McQuillen supervise students Colin Coughlin and Thomas Gullickson on a Cloverbank Sensory Pathway.

“I can hear the kids skipping and counting in the hallway. It has them thinking more mathematically while they’re getting the wiggles out,” Mrs. Zdyb said.

The sensory paths are open for use all day, and as long as the children are being safe, there’s no

wrong way to go through them. Some portions of the paths are changeable so there’s new ideas every few weeks.

Next time you visit one of our elementary schools, look down and follow the Sensory Path!





Lucas Palkowski performs in a green screen video.

STEAM Learning

Special Class Brings Out Student Creativity and Collaboration

STEAM activities require communication, compromise and creativity to solve a problem. STEAM isn't just an acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math; it is an integral and important part of students' educational experiences at Pinehurst Elementary.

In the four-week class, Art Teacher Vonessa Quinn focuses on a project that ties into what students are learning during regular instruction time for each grade level.

"STEAM is introduced to students starting in kindergarten. First grade learns about the solar system, so we focused on the planets and how time changes from day to night. Other grades have done projects centered around creating paper airplanes and measuring their flight distance, researching the seven natural wonders of the world and creating a green screen video. The fourth graders who do the green screen videos get to build on those skills in fifth grade with stop motion videos," Mrs. Quinn said.

Mrs. Quinn recently started with her class of second graders to begin constructing a Marble Rollercoaster. She initiated the lesson with a team building exercise to get them working as a group.

"An important part of STEAM is 'team,'" she told her students. "In art class you do your projects on your own, but STEAM work takes teamwork"

After watching a video and getting a closer look at Mrs. Quinn's model, the students got down to sketching the design of their own Marble Rollercoasters. Many featured funnels and steep slides. The students also made a "grocery list" of the recycled materials they would like to use in the design that must have at least two curves and a cup to catch the marble.

"They also learned about Rube Goldberg machines," she said. "Similar to the game, 'Mousetrap,' it's a chain reaction that causes something to happen, like catching the mouse in the game. I think we are going to try to focus in on that this year."

Mrs. Quinn met with grade-level teachers last year to coordinate the STEAM tie-ins to classroom lessons. STEAM experiences require students to work together and think innovatively to solve problems. These experiences often happen instinctively as children play and explore new things.

"In our school, teachers are embarking on new and different ways to engage students while meeting grade-level learning standards and expectations. They are finding ways to link content standards and learning objectives to STEAM experiences that can be assessed," Principal Jennifer Makowski said. "Mrs. Quinn's partnership with teachers to enhance classroom learning allows students to explore content in new and different ways."



Mrs. Quinn shows students a teamwork activity.

Advanced Art

Middle School put the Art in STEAM

The advanced art classes at Frontier Middle School are broadening students' horizons by stepping into the world of STEAM. Incorporating science, technology, engineering, art and math into projects has allowed seventh and eighth grade students to collaborate, learn and grow.

"The projects are student driven. We provide the starting point and they create their design. The students use the components of STEAM, choose their materials and set their own goals. They are the leaders and we are the facilitators," art teacher Lisa McCarthy explained.

The class started last year as an option for seventh and eighth graders instead of study hall. Through a STEAM grant and Frontier Alumni Association grant, Lisa McCarthy and Juliet Szczerbacki were able to purchase Makey Makey circuits, Chromebooks, Scratch coding software, LED lights, copper tape and batteries in order to incorporate STEAM into this year's projects.

The pair of art teachers also attended the Student STEAM Fest in Rochester, multiple workshops and WNY STEM Hub events in order to bring lessons back to apply in the classroom.

"With this smaller group, we are able to take on more open-ended projects that stretch students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills," Ms. Szczerbacki said. "Our big push has been to teach students about potential careers. We want to give them the pathway to show them how the skills they are learning connect to careers and opportunities outside of school."

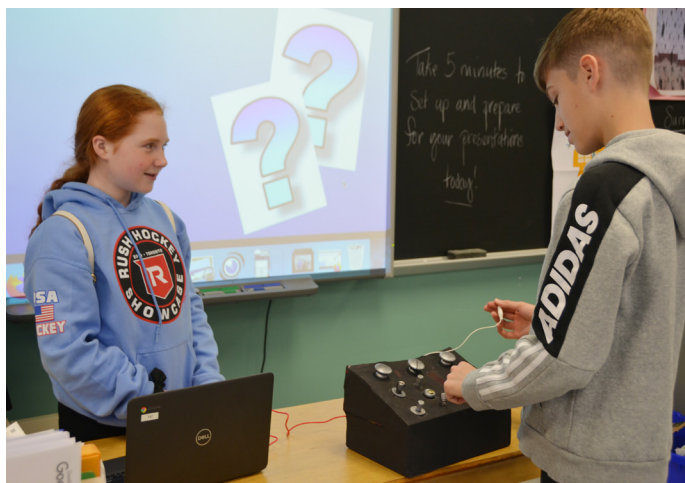
This year students have decorated the windows at the Hamburg Winter Castle, created a new mural for the bookstore, constructed 3D sculptures using only tape and built an invention featuring sound and color after researching the condition synesthesia, or the ability to see sounds and hear colors. Students will present their inventions at the Maker Expo on March 28 and Festival of the Arts on April 4.

Ms. McCarthy and Ms. Szczerbacki have plans to build on the program next year by utilizing the STEAM Lab more, especially the green screen, and modeling the invention project after the TV show Shark Tank.

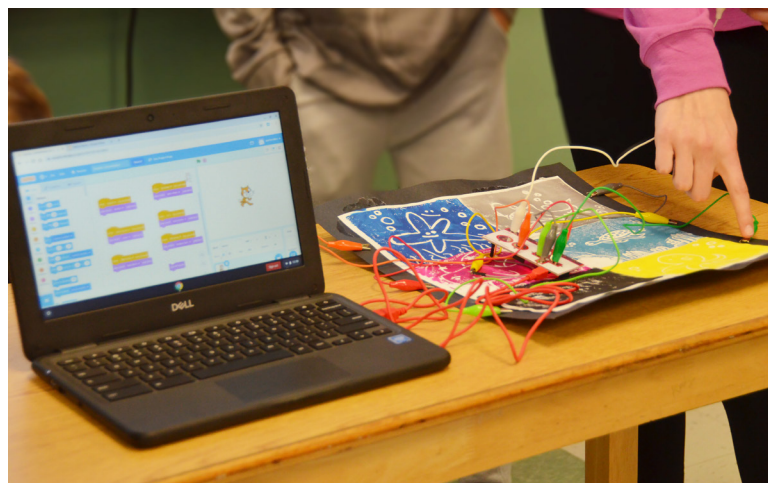
It is full 'STEAM' ahead to a bright future at Frontier Middle School!



Students paint the new bookstore.



Bailey MacKellar shows Charles Allesi the DJ turntable she created for the STEAM project.



Students created a STEAM project with incorporating coded sounds and sea creatures.

French Connection

Teacher Brings International Experiences to the Classroom

Abby Swartz, French III and V teacher and co-advisor of the French Club at Frontier High School, is no stranger to France, having lived there for a year. Over the summer she was selected for a unique opportunity to study teaching the French language and culture.

The two-week internship through American Association for Teachers of French (AATF) and the French Embassy was only open to 15 Americans. Held at the prestigious French language school, CAVILAM, in Vichy, Ms. Swartz was able to take four classes and partake in immersive experiences like tastings, tours and trips to nearby locations. The experience also featured a conference attended by French teachers from around the world.

It was an experience of a lifetime that she is bringing back to FHS.

“When I teach my students, I always try to bring in culture and draw from my own experiences as an au pair in Paris for a year and my extensive notes from this internship. I think the best way to learn is from someone’s experience,” Ms. Swartz said.

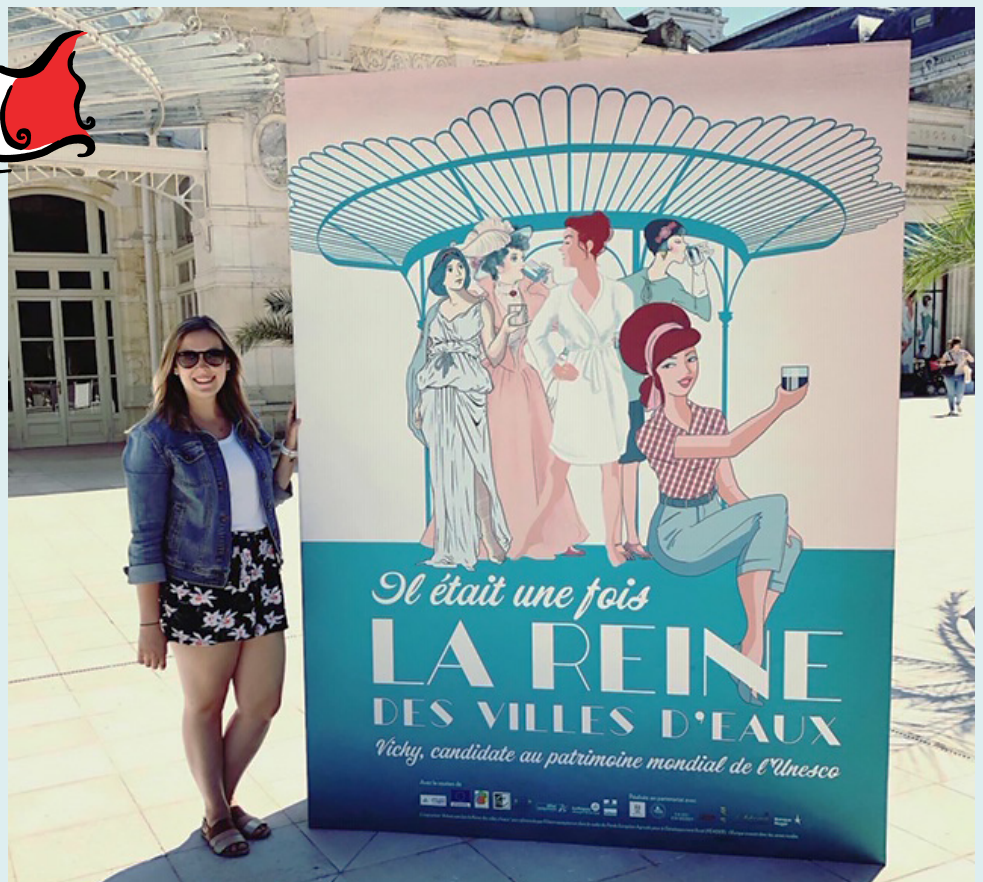
She uses her notes and the authentic materials and videos to create lessons and activities in class that keep her students engaged, like a creative writing activity about a funny picture to practice the past tense.

She also brings French experiences to the students. Recently the French Club held a cheese tasting and celebrated Chandelour (a holiday for eating crepes). Plans for future activities include celebrating Mardi Gras and learning about French language and culture in New Orleans and a trip to a French restaurant. Her next trip to France will be with French students, visiting Paris, Normandy and Brittany in 2021.

“My biggest goal is to have experiences to share with my students. Language isn’t all spelling and grammar, it’s also about inspiring them to travel and I hope when they do, they will think back to one of my stories. To me that’s what’s most important,” Ms. Swartz added.

photo top: French Club students, Ben Suarez, Jamie Badawy, Kylie Badawy and Aneeqa Hartel sample French cheeses.

photo right: Ms. Swartz was 1 of 15 Americans selected for an immersive French teaching internship.



The Best Part of Waking Up

Transitions Program Coffee Cart



The best part of waking up is coffee for some high school students and their customers! From set up to delivery and tear down, the ninth and tenth grade students in the 15:1 self-contained class are gaining soft skills and having a great time interacting with customers.

The program was created by Transitions Coordinator Stacey Davis as a way to fulfill students' work-based learning requirements for a Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) diploma. Seeing the success of similar programs elsewhere, Ms. Davis partnered with the Food Service Department to bring this opportunity for students and staff patrons.

"The students like the program and they know if they get their work done, then they can come to work the cart. They like interacting with the teachers and they get a chance to work on soft skills and customer service skills," Ms. Davis explained.

Although there isn't a lot of formal instruction, the small group allows Ms. Davis to teach lessons as needed in the areas of professionalism, attitude and hygiene. Since the cart opened, students have developed listening skills, teamwork, initiative and adaptability.



Alissa Krzyzanowski serves Mrs. Blood.



Luke French and Franz "Joey" Stadler deliver to Mrs. Courtney.

"If I am not here at set up, Dylan will get things going. Other students, like Joey were more nervous at first, but he has become more comfortable over time. The coffee cart has allowed all of the students to show their skills," Ms. Davis added. "I hope that working at the cart makes students more successful. I want them to further themselves and be the best they can be."

The Coffee Cart has received positive feedback and Ms. Davis hopes to see it expand so that more students can also participate and gain the same soft skills.





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Frontier Central District News

Published by the

Board of Education

Frontier Central Schools

5120 Orchard Avenue, Hamburg, NY 14075

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Frontier News is a publication of the Board of Education, and will produce Fall, Winter, Budget and Summer newsletters. Newsletters will be available electronically on the district website at www.frontiercsd.org.

The newsletters are designed to disseminate information, as well as to celebrate the success of individuals and programs that support the District's goals.


Public Relations Office: (716) 926-1798

Editor: Nicole Gugino

Design by: Erie 1 BOCES

WNY Maker Expo & RoboRAVE

Regional Event to be held at FHS on March 28



Are you ready for a full day of makers, hands-on competitions, live performances and a RoboRAVE?! On March 28, Erie 1 & Erie 2 Chautauqua Cattaraugus BOCES, Buffalo Public Schools, SUNY Erie, NYSCATE and Frontier Central Schools present the first ever WNY Maker Expo & RoboRave International Robotics Competition held at Frontier High School, 4432 Bayview Rd., Hamburg. Admission is free!

The fun begins at 9 a.m. and continues until 5 p.m., featuring food trucks, cardboard challenge, WNY student iron chef, paper circuits, learn to solder, VR glasses, special guests Mario the Maker Magician and global keynote speaker on creativity Kevin Honeycutt and much more!

Register your team of elementary, middle or high school students or "older kids" (college students and adults) for the RoboRAVE competition and compete against teams from around the world! There are five different challenges open to different age groups. You will need a team of at least two and the cost is \$20 per competition.

Visit wnymakerexpo.weebly.com to register, sponsor, volunteer or for more information. Stay tuned for updates on Facebook at facebook.com/WNYMakerExpo and Twitter @ExpoWny.