



# PORT NEWS

*Port Jervis City School District*

*November 2023*

## **PHASE I CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATE**

As you probably already know, the 100-year-old Port Jervis Middle School is closed again this school year for major renovations and an addition to the building. Considered to be one of the most beautiful and iconic buildings in the City of Port Jervis, it will be renovated from top to bottom and become a grades K-5 elementary school upon completion. The new addition to the building will include the main office, cafeteria, gymnasium and an elevator.

ASK will move from the Route 209 campus to East Main Street and will open as a K-5 school in September 2024. We originally had planned to occupy some parts of the school next spring but construction delays led us to the decision to move the entire school at once. The first floor will house kindergarten, grade one and music classrooms. The second floor will be for grades two and three. The third floor will be for grades four and five as well as the art room, STEAM lab and library. An open house and ribbon cutting will occur in late August 2024, just prior to the first day of school.

Having PJHS and PJMS together on one campus has many benefits. First, there will no longer be elementary students on campus with the older students. Second, middle school students will benefit by having access to better facilities and advanced courses. Third, it will be easier to share hard to fill teaching positions when both schools are under one roof and use the same bell schedule. Fourth, bus rides will be shorter since all the students are traveling to one location.

Go to our website: [www.pjschools.org](http://www.pjschools.org) and click on the "Capital Project" icon to see up-to-date photos and drone videos of the project.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE**

*Dr. John Bell*

The school year is off to a great start! Our student attendance numbers are up and our discipline referrals are down. COVID caused so many disruptions to the school setting. Our students crave a normal routine and our statistics show that this return to normalcy has led to improvement across the board.

Involved parents/guardians make a difference in the education of a child. We thank you for all you do to support your children on a daily basis. We would love to see you at parent-teacher conferences on Monday, November 20. Please see the article on page four for more information.

Phase I of the capital project, a complete renovation of the middle school in preparation of it becoming an elementary school, will be done next spring. ASK will occupy the newly renovated building in September 2024. Please see the adjacent article for more information. Phases II and III will start next spring and be completed for the opening of school in September 2024. See the article on page three about these two phases.

In closing, I want to reinforce the four student goals that I speak about when traveling around the district. We ask all students to: 1) push themselves academically, 2) have great attendance, 3) exhibit outstanding behavior, and 4) get involved in extra-curricular activities. This is the recipe for student success!

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## FALL SPORTS UPDATE

**Port Jervis Athletics had a fantastic fall season!!** Our modified and JV teams were very successful this year with not only participation numbers, but also with our competitiveness against other schools throughout the season. We had multiple Varsity teams qualify for sections and an individual who qualified for State Championships.

### Varsity Girls Volleyball

Our Varsity Girls' Volleyball team made sections and earned a home sectional game. They finished with an 11-6 overall record.



### Varsity Girls Soccer

Our Varsity Girls' Soccer team made sections for the first time in 18 years. They finished with a 10-5 overall record.



### Varsity Cross Country

Bryce Shannon, competed at the NYS Championships. He finished 29th in NYS out of 116 Competitors.



### Varsity Football

Our Varsity Football team finished the regular season with a 6-2 overall record. They won the League Championship as well as the Section 9 Championship. They are now competing in the NY State Quarterfinals.



## CAPITAL PROJECT PHASES II & III: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

One of the keys to keeping our current families and attracting new ones is to have first-class facilities. Whether it is new classrooms, labs, performing arts spaces, libraries or sports fields, the goal is to build and/or renovate our facilities to meet the needs of today's students. It is so exciting to see all the good things coming to Port Jervis!

**Phase II** of the capital project will focus on the Route 209 campus and will take place during the spring and summer of 2024. The current ASK Elementary will become the grades 6-8 Port Jervis Middle School starting in the fall of 2024 so there is a great deal of work to do as part of this conversion from an elementary school to a middle school.

The High School athletic fields and tennis courts will be completely redone. The playground area at ASK Elementary will be turned into athletic fields for the modified sports of soccer, baseball and softball. Also taking place over the summer of 2024 will be the conversion of some typical classroom space into specialized settings such as a technology education woodshop, family and consumer science kitchens, and art classrooms. The current ASK cafeteria will be converted into a music suite containing a chorus room, band room, practice rooms and an instrument storage area. The new middle school cafeteria will be adjacent to the large kitchen at the high school. Some of you may remember when the ASK cafeteria was there in the 1960s through the 1990s.

**Phase III**, which was approved by the voters last May, includes a host of projects that will take our district's facilities to the next level. The High School library is moving downstairs to the newer wing built in 1989-90 and will be approximately 50% larger. The current library will become two science classrooms. The auditorium will see significant improvements to its aesthetics and the sound system. Chase Field at the High School is getting new FieldTurf artificial grass and a new track. It will also be getting a new scoreboard and new lights were installed earlier this fall (see below). Glennette Field at the old Middle School/new elementary school is also getting FieldTurf artificial grass, new lights and a new scoreboard. A generator is being added to the new elementary school on East Main Street. There is also a new parking lot being built between the school and Gray-Parker Funeral Home on the former Statewide Oil property.



## INTRODUCING OUR NEW ADMINISTRATORS!!

All organizations rise and fall on the quality of their people. We are very excited with three recent additions to our administrative leadership team:



**Justin Boesch** is the new Director of Buildings and Grounds. Justin joined our district in the fall of 2023. He leads a department of 45 custodians, cleaners, groundskeepers and maintenance workers that work tirelessly to keep our schools and campuses clean, safe and attractive. Through proper training, our staff is able to handle many tasks that might be contracted out to outside vendors in other districts. This saves us time and money. Other aspects of the department include preventative maintenance of equipment to make it run more efficiently and extend its useful life, energy conservation projects and capital expenditure projects. Prior to his arrival in Port Jervis, Justin was second in command in the facilities department with the Goshen Central School District.



**Andrew Marotta** After serving 20 years as a secondary building Principal in Port Jervis schools, Andrew Marotta has taken on a new challenge as Director of Communications and Academic Services. Mr. Marotta will create and manage many of the informational posts that go out to the community through the website and on Port's social media outlets. The district will be increasing its communication and building stronger partnerships with families and community members. Mr. Marotta will handle a lot of these responsibilities.

He will also lead professional development throughout the district and oversee implementation of new programming, such as Project Lead the Way science, engineering, and biomedical programs that Port is introducing to its students and staff.



**Mike Ulbrich** returns to Port Jervis City School District as the Director of Information Technology, Data Privacy Officer, and Chief Information Officer. With over 15 years of experience in IT, Michael's expertise spans across various domains, including network infrastructure, cyber security, and digital transformation. Having previously worked as a supervisor in the IT department, he is excited to be returning to Port Jervis in this new capacity and is looking forward to continuing his work of moving the district forward in the ever-evolving world of technology.

## PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

### We want to see you!

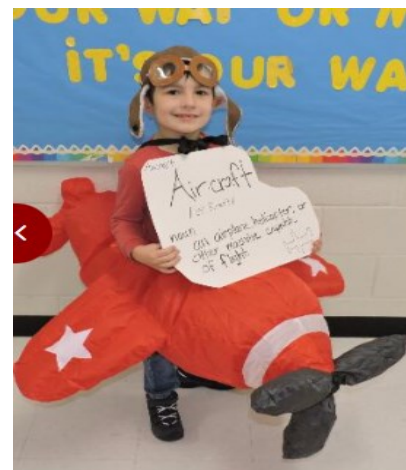
Parent-teacher conferences will be held on Monday, November 20 at all four schools as follows:

**High School and Middle School** will meet from 12-3 p.m. and 5-7 p.m.

**ASK and HBE** will meet from 1-3 p.m. and 5-7 p.m.

Please be on the lookout for more specific information from the schools about signing up for conference times. We encourage you to participate in these conferences. Good communication between parents and teachers will help our students be more successful.

Finally, we encourage you to contact your child's teacher(s) whenever a problem occurs. You don't have to wait until conference time to address an issue. We welcome your calls and/or emails whenever needed.



## IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

**Main Line: (845) 858-3100**

<b>Port Jervis High School:</b>	<b>Ext. 1500</b>	<b>Athletic Department:</b>	<b>Ext. 1881</b>
<b>Port Jervis Middle School:</b>	<b>Ext. 2500</b>	<b>Food Service Department:</b>	<b>Ext. 3896</b>
<b>Anna S. Kuhl Elementary (ASK):</b>	<b>Ext. 3500</b>	<b>Pupil Personnel Services:</b>	<b>Ext. 6504</b>
<b>Hamilton Bicentennial (HBE):</b>	<b>Ext. 4500</b>	<b>Buildings &amp; Grounds:</b>	<b>Ext. 7501</b>