

News

...of the Horseheads Central School District

February/March 2016

PBL: helping students become future-ready

Students in grades K-8 across the district are working on solutions to real-world problems and challenges through project-based learning, or PBL.

PBL asks students to work through questions and challenges over an extended period of time, using critical-thinking skills and a variety of resources. And if their original plans and solutions don't work out, students try again.

In the summer of 2015, 33 teachers and administrators participated in a three-day workshop on PBL through the Buck Institute. The result was a spark of excitement and a wide range of projects for the school year.

PBL is part of the "rigor and relevance" curriculum, challenging students and making their work meaningful. It requires students to use the "four Cs" - critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity.

PBL is student driven; teachers present the challenge, but students decide how to work toward it, what materials they'll use, and more.

"We're moving students to become life-long learners," said Director of Elementary Education Karen Bracy. "They're learning important academic skills, but they're also learn-

ing how to apply them to known challenges and to unpredictable situations they may face in the future too."

In Kim Arnold's fourth-grade class at Big Flats Elementary, students are working on building a device that will flip a coin. Working in groups, they've

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Merger study concludes; what's next for the district?

On December 3, voters in both the Horseheads and Elmira Heights districts turned down the non-binding straw poll asking if they are in favor of merging the two districts.

Voters in Horseheads turned down the measure by a margin of more than four to one.

As a result, merger discussions between the districts have ended.

"On behalf of the district, I would like to thank everyone who voted," said Superintendent Thomas J. Douglas. "Our community's clear message is that we remain the Horseheads Central School District Blue Raiders.

"This vote signifies that we, as a district and school community, continue to move forward to make sure we provide the best education for our children, quality facilities, and a strong financial future," Douglas said.

The Horseheads district has also been conducting a district study to look at facilities and grade configurations.

The Board of Education and administration will continue to study district finances and the various options before deciding if they will make changes to the district's grade configuration and facilities in the near future.



Teghan Brown and Lucy Theetge, students in Kim Arnold's fourth-grade class at Big Flats, work on their coin-flipping device.



Our Mission

“Quality Education for All”

The Mission of the Horseheads Central School Community is to provide a quality education for all within a nurturing environment which promotes excellence, growth, and a sense of civic responsibility.



Our Vision

We, the Horseheads School Community, want a district that:

- is nurturing and responsive;
- strives for balance in a supportive, safe, encouraging environment;
- recognizes the need for continual improvement in an ever-changing world;
- has a clearly defined focus on learning outcomes, collaboration, and support systems; and
- creates an environment within which everyone can thrive and achieve his/her highest potential.



Our Beliefs

We believe:

- everyone can achieve his/her highest potential;
- trust is essential for growth;
- learning is cooperative;
- programs are inclusive;
- success will be nurtured and expected;
- learning is performance-based;
- decisions are data-based; and
- responsibility, respect and results guide our every effort.



Exit Outcomes

The Horseheads Central School graduate will be...

- a life-long learner;
- a caring, productive citizen;
- an effective communicator;
- a creative problem-solver;
- a quality decision-maker;
- a healthy, well-rounded person.

www.horseheadsdistrict.com

Safe Schools Line

To report a concern, rumor, or other safety issue anonymously and confidentially 24 hours a day, call

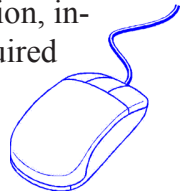
**795-2044 or
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On-line newsletter

To receive the newsletter on-line, please go to our website at www.horseheadsdistrict.com. In the Featured Links at the left side of the page, click on “E-Newsletter Sign-Up.”

When a new edition of the newsletter is uploaded to our website, you will receive an e-mail with a link that will take you directly to the newsletter.

Please note that some information, including budget information, is required by law to be sent to all district residents, so you will still receive those documents by postal mail.



Please send us information

If you live in the district and have a young child, please share your child’s information with us so that we’ll be prepared to contact you when your child is eligible for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten.

Please send your child’s name, birthdate, parent(s)’ name(s), address, and phone number to hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com.

Questions? E-mail hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com or call 739-5601, x4251.

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Project-based learning, continued from page 1

come up with a plan that has at least three steps. They then tried out their plan using materials found in their room, such as blocks, sticks, marbles, tape, glue, cup lids, cardboard rolls, magnets, and more.

During the next few weeks, they'll spend time building and testing their devices, tweaking their plans or changing them altogether, and trying again. The students will decide on those changes. Arnold said.

"There will be a lot of ideas being used up before they get really serious," she said. "And we'll share problems and solutions during class discussions, so they'll be helping each other too."

During their first building session, students could be heard saying "we are frustrated," but also "let's try this."

Students in five classrooms at the Intermediate School are acting as "zoo consultants" for the Ross Park Zoo in Binghamton. Teachers Kerry Ike, Paige Smith, Kaitlyn Carroll, Amy Rial, Chris Bell, and Becky Schoonover are coordinating the Zoo Crew Project.

At the beginning of the project, students were asked "As zoo consultants, what can we do to help the zoo become a more attractive destination for both visitors and animals?"

The Ross Park Zoo Mobile visited the school in September, and in October, students visited the zoo in Binghamton. Their goal on the visit was to look at the zoo with a critical eye and evaluate the zoo structures as well as the animals.

Additionally, Rob Switala from Bergmann Associates talked to the students about being a project



Intermediate School sixth-graders visit the Ross Park Zoo in October to learn more about the zoo and its operations.



Gardner Road fourth-graders working on their human footprint project.

manager and everything that type of work entails. He also gave them advice for moving forward with their project.

Each student researched a zoo animal and is working with a partner to create a magazine article that will also include hand drawn pictures, photographs, and some creative writing pieces. The magazine will be paid for in part by advertisements the students have sold to local businesses.

The students also held a logo contest. The winning artwork, drawn by Sophia Lotocky, will be used as a logo on t-shirts as well as all future publications.

Using what they learned at their tour of the zoo, students created a list of items that may be in need of improvement.

"They looked at the list and realized that each item involved money," said Teacher Kerry Ike. They then brainstormed ideas to generate revenue. The students have been busy collecting cans and bottles. So far, they've collected approximately \$135.

"This is the type of rigorous and relevant work we want for our students," said Bracy. "We're preparing them to be future ready."

Here are some of the other projects happening in the district:

Our Human Footprint, Gardner Road

With Elisabeth Bostwick, Stephanie Andrus, Jamie Dauphinet, and Jessica Shutter:

Our Human Footprint is about how we affect the earth and our environment. Fourth-graders collected a day's worth of trash to see how much of what we

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Project-based learning, continued from page 3

typically throw away could be recycled. They've been researching pollution, and they wrote essays about the issue they've chosen - land pollution, air pollution, or water pollution.

Currently they're collaborating with classmates to create online presentations to a community member of their choice that is linked to their issue.

For example, one team plans to invite managers from a local movie complex to inform them about the issue of land pollution and seek how they can collaborate to develop recycling opportunities to lessen the human footprint we leave behind each time we attend a movie.

Another team will connect with specific car companies via Skype to present to them and ask for more information about how car companies are working to improve emissions. Another group will connect with the Friends of the Chemung River on the issue of water pollution.

The students hope to learn more about how we can all work together to care for our earth and bodies of water.

The SIZzle Project, Intermediate School

With teachers Heather Henry, Carly Hays, and Stephanie Lewis

SIZzle stands for "Social Improvement Zone." Focusing on the English Language Arts and Social Studies stands, this spring project will ask students to be town planners. They'll create proposals for how to turn an empty building into a useful place for our community.

Students will be involved in two different tasks. On the individual level, they'll write persuasive essays, making sure to support their proposal with evidence. As a group, they will produce a visual proposal, using PowerPoint, Prezi, iMovie, posters, etc.

Drones for Good, Middle School

With Joanne Doherty, reading teacher

Students spent the month of January learning about drones and drone technology to understand ways drones can be used for humanitarian applications. At the end of the project, students will vote on which one of these five agencies are most deserving

Randi Hewit, president of the Community Foundation of Elmira-Corning and the Finger Lakes, talks to fifth-graders December 1 about local organizations and their needs.



of an imaginary grant to pursue the use of drones and drone technology to support their agency in its mission: the American Red Cross; Doctors Without Borders; The Nature Conservancy; SARdrones.org's worldwide volunteer search and rescue network; and the Sierra Club, a grass roots environmental organization.

Students also had the chance to observe a presentation on how drones work, practical uses, and possible career opportunities in the future.

Caring Citizens, Intermediate School

With teachers Jamie Van Zile, Pamela Snyder, and Kirsten Mucci

The idea behind this project was to encourage students to look for ways to help out and be a caring, productive citizen in their community.

The project started with all three classes having a discussion with Randi Hewit, president of the Community Foundation of Elmira-Corning and the Finger Lakes, about local organizations, their needs, ways to help out, and more.

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Abi Bennett and Lucas Drapikowski, fourth-graders in Kim Arnold's class at Big Flats, work on their coin-flipping device.



Cargill Salt grants the district \$45,000 for Makerspace

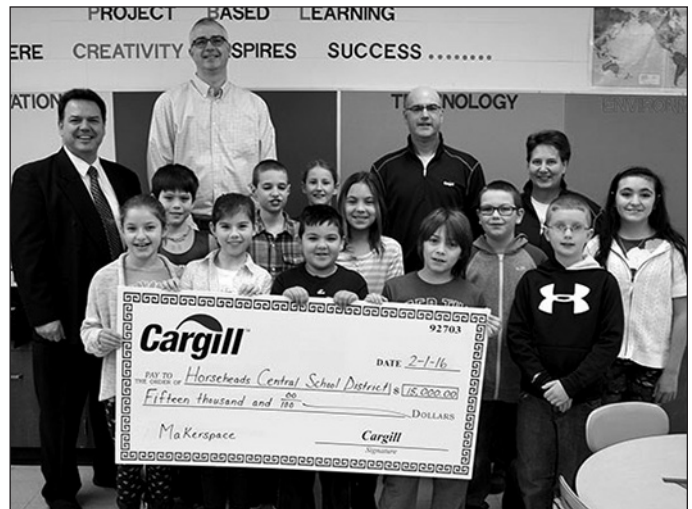
Cargill Salt has granted the district \$45,000 for Makerspace supplies and equipment at Big Flats, Gardner Road, and the Intermediate School for three years.

Makerspaces inspire students and invite them to question and wonder. A Makerspace is a designated place in a school that invites students to apply and extend their learning, allowing them to tinker, design, build, explore, engineer, invent, fail, and try again and again.

This initiative aligns with district goals of helping students become future-ready students, establish a growth mindset, and to launch their ideas about careers.

The grant will help fund the three schools' Makerspaces with tools, storage and organization supplies, and innovative technology materials.

On February 1, Cargill Plant Manager Keith Klug, Human Resources Specialist Sherry Saunders, and Jerry Dunlavey, storeroom manager and Cargill



Front row, left to right: Samantha Webb, Amelia Christmas, Hayden Chatlani, Vincent Cole, Zane Dixon. Second row: Brayden Kelly, Jackson Klug, Vivienne Saunders, Anna Lowe, Logan Meisner, and Violet Tedesco. Back row, left to right, are Superintendent Tom Douglas along with Cargill's Keith Klug, Jerry Dunlavey, and Sherry Saunders.

Cares community lead, visited Big Flats to present the district with the first installment of the grant.

Music students connect to seniors through Harmony Bridge

Students in instrumental music ensembles in grades 6-12 are connecting with senior citizens in our community through the Harmony Bridge program.

The groups have been visiting area senior living residences since the program's kick-off in November. Several large and small ensembles have performed at Bethany Village and Bethany Courtyards, Absolute Care/Three Rivers, Elcor, Brookdale Senior Living, Woodbrook, Bethany Manor, and the Chemung County Nursing Facility.

Students not only play for the residents; they also sit with them after their performances. The two

components - performance and personal connection - are critical to Harmony Bridge, a national program founded by Michael Levine of the world-renowned Dallas Brass.

Horseheads is one of just five districts in the nation chosen to pilot the program.



Music students perform at Absolute Care-Three Rivers Skilled Nursing December 7 as part of the Harmony Bridge program.

PBL, continued from page 4

From there, the students chose organizations to research - history, needs, outreach programs, interesting facts, etc. Each student then did something to help that organization, from donations to raising money to volunteering.

Good deeds included collecting items and cuddling cats at the Chemung County SPCA, collecting gifts for an adopted family, volunteering for the Salvation Army bell-ringing project and the Arctic League, visiting residents in nursing homes, helping out at a local 5K race, and more.

The students finished their project by creating classroom presentations to showcase their organization and share their act of kindness.

Conversations with the superintendent

All district residents are welcome to speak with Superintendent Thomas J. Douglas at his monthly Conversations with the Superintendent. Here are the remaining dates:

February 22	Millport Village Hall, 7pm
March 14	Horseheads American Legion, 10am
April 11	Big Flats Community Center, 7pm

Kindergarten screening and registration dates

District elementary schools will hold kindergarten registration and screening on the following dates:

Big Flats Elementary School:	March 21-24
Center Street Elementary School:	March 29-April 1
Gardner Road Elementary School:	April 18-22
Ridge Road Elementary School:	May 2-6

The school will contact parents of students eligible for kindergarten who are in our database to schedule a day and time during registration week for that school. The school will then send a registration packet to the parents with forms and information. Parents must bring the child to registration, along with the child's birth certificate, record of immunizations, two forms of proof that they live in the district, and any custody agreements and/or court documents.

If a parent does not receive a phone call from the school, that means we do not have the child's information in our database. Parents of children who are eligible for kindergarten - that is, with a birthdate on or before December 1, 2011 and the primary residence is in the district - and do not get contacted should contact the school their child would attend:

Big Flats Elementary School:	739-6373
Center Street Elementary School:	795-2580
Gardner Road Elementary School:	739-6347
Ridge Road Elementary School:	739-6351

Parents unsure of which school zone they live in may e-mail hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com, or call 739-5601, x4251.

Streets and their corresponding elementary school are also listed on the district website at www.horseheadsdistrict.com. Go to Student Registration in the Featured Links menu on the left of the page, then scroll down to 'Which elementary school?'

Questions? Call 739-5601, x4251.

Learn more about the district...

- Visit our website at www.horseheadsdistrict.com
- Like us on Facebook - district and school pages
- Follow us on Twitter - @HhdsSchools



Budget dates

The district has begun the development process for the 2016-17 budget.

The Board of Education held the first of three budget workshops February 4. The remaining workshops are March 3 at 6pm at the Big Flats Community Center and April 7 at the Broad Street School building. Meetings are open to the public.

The workshops will be recorded. Presentations and videos will be on the district website at www.horseheadsdistrict.com. Choose '2016-17 Budget' from the Featured Links menu on the left side of the page.

The board will vote to adopt the 2016-17 proposed budget at their April 20 meeting, which begins at 6pm at Gardner Road Elementary School.

Three Budget Q&A sessions are scheduled: May 2, Big Flats Community Center; May 12, Millport Village Hall; and May 16, Horseheads Town Hall. All sessions begin at 7pm.

A board candidates' forum will be held May 9, at 7pm, in the High School Multi-Media Center.

The Budget Vote is Tuesday, May 17, 7am to 8pm.

Budget information is on the district website at www.horseheadsdistrict.com.

Students shine at Scholastic Art Awards

Congratulations to the 32 Middle and High School art students who won 55 total awards in the 2016 Scholastic Art Awards competition. The students' work will be on display at the Arnot Art Museum throughout the month of February. Gold Key-winning art continues on to the national competition.

High School:

Katelyn Armstrong, grade 12 – Gold Key, Drawing/Illustration, *Cats*
Allison Beck, grade 9 – Honorable Mention, Drawing/Illustration, *Geometric Forms in Flight*
Benjamin Clark, grade 12 – Honorable Mention, Painting, *Field of Gold*
Tia Comstock, grade 12 – Honorable Mentions, Drawing/Illustration, *Dying to Hear Your Voice* and *Self Portrait*
Emma Curreri, grade 12 – Honorable Mention, Drawing/Illustration, *Demolition*
Matthew Dunn, grade 12 – Elmira Regional Art Society Award; Gold Keys: Portfolio, *The Forgotten Fighters*; Sculpture, *The Matriarch*. Silver Keys: Sculpture, *Cerberus*; Printmaking, *The Mutant Majungasaurus*; Drawing/Illustration, *Food Chain*. Honorable Mentions: Printmaking, *Albino Tyrant King*; Drawing/Illustration, *Goliath*; Portfolio, *Spawn of a New Era*; Sculpture: *Scarlett Johansson*; *Cash Cow*; *Phosphorescence*; *Lace Winged Fire Basilisk*; and *Poseidon's Pangolin*
Jayne Elston, grade 12 – Honorable Mention, Photography, *Chicken*
Liam Johnson, grade 12 – Silver Key, Comic Art, *Off To An Adventure*; Honorable Mention, Drawing/Illustration, *Then There Was Light*
Madison Jurusik, grade 12 – Elmira Regional Art Society Award; American Visions Award and Gold Key, Drawing/Illustration, *Meditating Mom*; Silver Key, Painting, *The Girl in the Red Hat*; Honorable Mentions: Painting; *The Girl Who Fought for Education*; Printmaking, *Child of the Earth*; Mixed Media, *Fishing for Beta Fish Off Moss Island*
Joanne Kim, grade 9 – Gold Key, Painting, *Capturing the Summer*
Katie Maher, grade 10 – Honorable Mention, Drawing/Illustration, *Poof*
Amber Newton, grade 11 – Honorable Mention, Printmaking, *Dotted Parrot*
Amelia O'Shell, grade 12 – Honorable Mention, Mixed Media, *Adirondack Basket*
Hunter Perez, grade 11 – Gold Key, Drawing/Ill., *Portrait 2*; Honorable Mntn, Printmaking, *Overcoat*

Alissa Rice, grade 11 – Gold Key, Digital Art, *Daphne*
Victoria Riina, grade 10 – Silver Key, Drawing/Illustration, *Charcoal Drawing*, Honorable Mention, Painting, *Pennsylvania Grand Canyon Watercolor*
Matthew Salisbury, grade 12 – Honorable Mention, Ceramics/Glass, *The Hunter's Jug*
Rachel Stermer, grade 12 – Silver Key, Drawing/Illustration, *Humbabe*
Jane Suhey, grade 12 – Honorable Mention, Sculpture, *Venus*
Amanda Sutton, grade 11 – American Visions Award and Gold Key, Photography, *See Through*; Honorable Mention, Digital Art, *Paint Your Own Picture*

Middle School:

Heewon Ahn, grade 7 – Gold Key, Sculpture, *Arf*
Jessa Barton, grade 7 – Silver Key, Digital Art, *Charred Dreams*
Owen Foster, grade 8 – Honorable Mention, Drawing/Illustration, *Lil Bro*
Bailey Garcia, grade 8 – Honorable Mention, Drawing/Illustration, *Faces*
Cameron Knapp, grade 8 – Silver Key, Drawing/Illustration, *Selfie*
Rachel Nagy, grade 8 – Silver Key, Digital Art, *Light in the Madness*
Meredith Rahr, grade 8 – Gold Key, Sculpture, *Ship Wreck*; Honorable Mention, Drawing/Illustration, *Portrait of Liberty*
Rayne Rehkopf, grade 8 – Silver Key, Drawing/Illustration, *Cousins*
Lacey Scofield, grade 8 – Honorable Mention, Sculpture, *Teardrops Fall*
Kara Six, grade 8 – Honorable Mention, Drawing/Illustration, *Joy*
Maiah Skakal, grade 8 – Honorable Mention, Drawing/Illustration, *Game On*
Michelle Yu, grade 7 – Honorable Mention, Drawing/Illustration, *Michelle*

See photos of Gold Key-winning art on the district's website at www.horseheadsdistrict.com (scrolling headlines at the center of the page), on the schools' Facebook pages, and on the district's Twitter feed.

Events

- February 24 High School Parent Advisory Council, Cafeteria, 9am; GST BOCES TEC Exploration Night, 5pm; Ridge Road PTO Carnival Planning, 6pm; Ridge Road PTO, 6:30pm
- February 25 Board of Education, Middle School, 6pm
- February 26 Ridge Road PTO Family Night, 6:30pm
- March 1 Big Flats Principal Chat, 6pm; Center Street Coffee with the Principal, 6pm; Big Flats PTO, 6:30pm; Center Street PTO, 6:30pm
- March 2 High School Marking Period ends; Gardner Road Principal Chat, 5:30pm; Gardner Road PTO, 6pm
- March 3-4 Ridge Road Fourth-Grade Play *Summer Camp*, 7pm
- March 3 Board of Education Budget Workshop, Big Flats Community Center, 6pm; High School Bands, Auditorium, 7:30pm
- March 4 Intermediate School Math/Science/Technology Night, 6:30pm
- March 8 High School Parent Advisory Council, Cafeteria, 9am; Intermediate School PTO, 6:30pm
- March 9 Middle School Progress Reports; Middle School Parent Conferences, 5:30pm
- March 10 Center Street Project Fair, 5pm
- March 11 No School - Superintendent's Conference Day
- March 14 Conversation with the Superintendent, Horseheads American Legion, 10am
- March 15 Big Flats PTO Science Fair, 6:30pm; Ridge Road PTO Carnival Planning, 6pm; Ridge Road PTO, 6:30pm
- March 17-19 High School Greenroom Players' *Bye Bye Birdie*, Auditorium, 7pm
- March 18 Center Street Spring Carnival, 5pm; Gardner Road Family Fun Night, 6:30pm; Ridge Road Science Night

Bye Bye Birdie March 17-19

The High School Greenroom Players proudly present *Bye Bye Birdie* March 17-19, 7pm, in the Auditorium.

Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$10 for students and senior citizens. They may be purchased prior to the shows each day or by visiting the High School Box Office during the week of the show. Call 795-2500 x1780 for details. Box Office schedule will be available in March.

Horseheads Central School District
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