



EAST ROCHESTER UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT School District News

Winter 2021

HOME OF THE CHAMPIONS



During a shortened fall sports season this year, East Rochester Union Free sports were able to secure **three** Section V championships! These three sports were the only varsity offerings this fall due to COVID-19. The Girls Varsity Tennis Team, Girls Varsity Field Hockey Team and Boys Varsity Soccer Team all brought home trophies in their classifications.

It had been eight years since the ER Girls Tennis Team had made it to the sectional finals. The team took on Mynderse for the Class CI Sectional Championship, winning 4-1. The team had a record of 13-1 for the season.

The ER Field Hockey team won the 2020 Class B Field Hockey Sectional Championship, beating Pittsford Sutherland in overtime to win the title. The last time ER Field Hockey were sectional champions was 2009. ER came out on top after teammate Riley Wing scored the game-winning goal. The team ended the season with a 10-3-0 record.

To round out the triple crown, the ER Boys Varsity Soccer Team triumphed over Holley with a score of 4-0 in the Section V Class C Championship game, bringing home the Section V block for the second year in a row.

Additionally, the Tennis and Field Hockey teams had all athletes earning scholar athlete status. The Boys Soccer team had 11 athletes earn scholar athlete status!



Our District's Mission

The Mission of the East Rochester School District is to prepare students to be college and career ready and to provide a quality education in a safe environment where all students develop the abilities, attitudes and values necessary for responsible, productive citizenship.

Our Vision

The Vision of the East Rochester School District is that students will learn through the highest quality instruction which recognizes each student's strengths, talents, interests, learning styles and rates of learning, using developmentally appropriate methods.

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A letter from the Superintendent and Building Principals

Dear East Rochester Families,

As we move through the second half of the school year, it is important to take a moment and reflect on some of the expectations we have for our students. Our children are exposed to dozens of opportunities throughout the school year including, but not limited to, educational concepts, communication formats, conflict resolution strategies, different forms of play, emotional development activities and socialization skills. Our teachers and support staff, along with you as parents, have provided these opportunities in a way that is appropriate for students.

At the elementary level, we are focused on your child's academic, social, emotional and physical development. This includes showing appropriate behavior by demonstrating the 3 B's: Be Respectful, Be Responsible and Be Safe. We work together as a team as we focus on learning strategies, utilizing a multisensory approach with hands-on learning opportunities. This includes opportunities to learn through play. Explicit instruction in all content areas is used to develop the necessary skills to become successful critical thinkers. Technology is also integrated into classroom lessons to enhance instruction and provide further opportunities for students to acquire the necessary skills to be successful in future grades.

At the secondary level, our Middle Level Academy and High School students are still fostering academic and emotional growth by engaging in key learning opportunities. Our students are demonstrating more independence than ever, especially in time management, due to the reduced amount of in-person learning at the high school level. As educators, we are committed to supporting our students where they are on this spectrum of increased independence. Instructional technology is being integrated into both in-person and remote learning to bridge the models together, with Google Classroom being the primary organizational tool. Teachers are making themselves available for scheduled and impromptu meetings, as needed. Using various indicators (attendance, course grades, etc.), our staff is making sure students are staying on track for credits, especially our seniors.

Thank you for our continued partnership as we work to finish the 2020-21 school year.

Regards,

Jim, Marisa and Casey



Remote students return to the classroom

Students who spent the first ten weeks of school learning remotely and wanted to return to in-person learning were back inside their classrooms on November 16!

"It's good to be in [in-person learning] because it is way easier to understand the material in school," says sophomore Zarriah Eldridge, who recently switched from fully remote to hybrid learning. Zarriah says she likes being able to ask her teacher questions in person, while learning in school.

"I feel the transition to in-person learning went extremely smooth," says Lindsey Marquez, whose daughter Latianna made the switch. "I believe in-person learning is fundamental for education and I am happy we made the switch!"

Recent decisions on changing learning models were finalized in early February, as families worked with building administration to establish start dates for a switch to in-person learning. There will be one more opportunity in the spring to change instructional models.



Raising money by dressing down

Every Tuesday, teachers and staff are encouraged to participate in the "pay to wear jeans day," to raise money that is donated to good causes. The first donation recipient was kindergarten student Ryker Heitsman, who was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia in January 2020. Ryker's mom, Christine has been trying her best to keep up with Ryker's appointments, transfusions and injections during the last year. The ER community hopes the money collected during the fundraiser- over \$1200- will help with any medical bills the family accrues during his fight with cancer.



Money collected during December totaled \$560 and was donated to the East Rochester Resource Center before Christmas, to help local families celebrate the holidays.

ER senior surprised with car

Senior Ashtyn Carr-Pieramico was not expecting to walk out of school and learn the car idling in front of the building was his... but that's exactly what happened in October!

Former ER student Collin Gibboney and his business partners Chris McGill and Mark Ricci reached out to the district after finding success with their automotive business, Northside Auto Sales. Gibboney says he was looking for a way to give back and spread kindness after his personal success and decided to give a current, deserving East Rochester student a car.

Teachers and administrators recommended Ashtyn, expressing how deserving he is. The senior is on the wrestling team and was employed as summer help with the custodial staff at the school. Ashtyn says he couldn't believe the surprise and that he was grateful to the team for their gift. Then, he hopped in the car to take it for a test drive!



ER Veterans Day featured by NYSED

The East Rochester Union Free School District was featured in the New York State Education Department's "Staying Connected: Your Stories" weekly newsletter this fall. NYSED shared an article on how the district recognized Veterans Day.

The district traditionally holds a ceremony for Veterans Day, inviting veterans to the school to be recognized. This year, however, the district had to adapt the ceremony to align with COVID-19 protocols. Students and staff learned why we celebrate Veterans Day and then wrote letters that will be mailed to veterans, thanking them for their service. In lieu of an in-person assembly, a video was created and shared as a virtual assembly. The video can be found on the district website.



Fifth-graders take a Mission to Mars

Every year, fifth grade students at the elementary school take part in a Challenger Mission event, marking the highlight of the year for many students! Prior to this year, students travelled to the BOCES Challenger Center to participate in a simulated Mission to Mars. This year, due to COVID-19, the event was live-streamed.

Students were tasked with specific roles, collecting data that would be communicated to the NASA team during the mission. The class virtually met with the Challenger team on Thursday, to learn about

what they do at NASA and how to prepare for the mission. Then, after spending time exploring and finding the data necessary for their role, the students met with the team again for the journey! Students communicated with mission control as well as with the astronaut aboard the shuttle, learning how important the entire team is and that communication is key for a successful mission.

Fifth grade teacher Mark Denecke says the Mission to Mars is an amazing STEM experience, and he is grateful for the partnership with BOCES because the trip is one that is often well-remembered by his students.

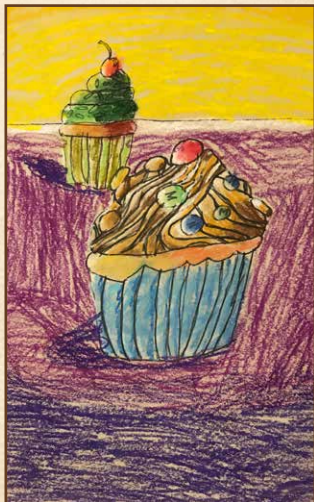
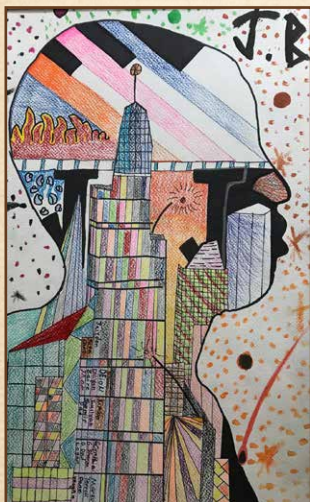


Celebrating the Arts

Art Highlights

This fall, eighth grade students created personal narrative self-portraits modeled after the work of Marc Chagall. Students told a personal story through their drawing, capturing a moment in time or including bits and pieces of who they are. "You can look at these amazing drawings and feel connected to the artists," says Art Teacher Shana Diehl.

At the elementary school, fifth grade artists worked on their art skills by practicing a step-by-step process of drawing cupcakes. Students identified basic shapes, learned to measure angles and proportions and placed cupcakes on their paper to create a sense of space. The students then added bold, bright colors and shading to make the shapes look three-dimensional. According to Mrs. Diehl, the process paid off and the students had amazing results!



ER Senior selected for All-State Treble Choir

Congratulations to high school senior Sydney Frieberger, who has been selected for the All-State Treble Choir this year! Sydney will be rehearsing and recording her select part and will submit an audio file to be mixed with 200 other singers' files for the creation of the virtual choir. The performance will be streamed in early March. Auditions for selection in the NYSSMA honors ensembles were held in April 2019 at the NYSSMA Solo Festival held at Webster Central School District. Congratulations Sydney!



The ER Music Department spreads cheer

Though the music department wasn't able to hold any in-person concerts this year due to COVID-19 restrictions, they were still able to put a virtual performance together for families to enjoy!

Thank all of the students who participated and to Tim Lambert, Mark Gowman, Leanne Zito, Mykel Sapienza, Katie Rubert and Lindsey Borden who helped with this project and continue to provide amazing and safe music education even in the midst of COVID-19!

The video can be viewed on the district website, under the "News" section.



ER Boys Soccer ranks first in New York State

The ER Varsity Boys Soccer team, led by coach Mike Domm, was ranked #1 in the final New York State Class C Boys Soccer standings this fall! The New York State Sportswriters and Coaches Organization (NYSSCOGS) released boys soccer all-state team rankings in December, when it was also announced that Mike, who has coached the team for 8 years, was named the New York State Coach of the Year!

In November, after going 13-1-0 for the season, the team won the Section V Class C Championship game and brought home the Section V block for the second year in a row. In addition to an amazing season, the team had 11 athletes earn scholar athlete status this fall!

ER senior earns Section V Scholarship award

ER senior Julia Michalski was the recipient of the Section V Scholarship award for Field Hockey this year! Throughout the year, one student-athlete is selected for the scholarship from each Section V sport. We are proud to have Julia as this year's Field Hockey recipient!



Extracurricular activities return to ER

Extracurricular activities are back! After guidance from the State was released in October, the district has been able to allow for select clubs to begin meeting again. Clubs currently meeting include (but are not limited to) MLA Student Council, Environmental Club, High School Mastermind and High School Yearbook Club. While some meetings and events are held in person, clubs are also using Google Meet to connect with one another.

Students involved in the clubs acknowledge that changes this year may complicate things, but they are focusing on the positive and hope that shines through.

"I hope that this yearbook encompasses the trials we've gone through in the past year, but also the amazing stuff we've all done, such as the teams coming together and managing to win three sectional titles," says Julia Michalski. "I want this yearbook to really stand out so people don't forget about what happened in 2020!"



Celebrating Black Scholars

Black Scholars are graduating seniors of African descent who have maintained at least a "B" average throughout their high school years. Students are identified by their schools at the end of the first semester of their senior year. Once identified, students must maintain honor grades through their last semester.

The following students have met the academic criteria for the Urban League Black Scholars Early Recognition Program:

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| • Darlree Brumfield | • Daja James |
| • Kiara Coleman | • Cassara Jones |
| • Samantha Connell | • Christian Jones |
| • Elias Coram | • London Jones |
| • Faith Daniels | • Symora Keene |
| • Michael Daniels | • Adrian Letta |
| • Elias Francis | • Janai McCullough |
| • Janessa Gallina | • Marie Mekoyo-Bakou |
| • Chaunsey Gilbert | • Jacen Mitchell |
| • Tai'Jinae Gray | • Jalen Patterson |
| • Robert Grayson | • Beryalis Rodriguez |
| • Tiana Gunner | • Zachaiah Singletary |
| • Belahna Hanna | • Caleb Wilcox |
| • Lebria Hickman | |



Left to Right: Samantha Connell, Adrian Letta, Marie Mekoyo-Bakou, Chaunsey Gilbert

National Honor Society inducts 14 new members

On February 3, the East Rochester Union Free Chapter of the National Honor Society welcomed 14 new members during an induction ceremony. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the ceremony was held virtually this year. An introduction was given by Senior Sydney Freiberger before current members described the four qualities held in high esteem by the members of the National Honor Society: Scholarship, Service, Leadership and Character. Senior Emma Henrichs recited the NHS Pledge before new members were presented. A recording of the ceremony can be found on the East Rochester Jr./Sr. High School website.

Congratulations to all of this year's inductees!

Senior inductees include: Junior inductees include:

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| • Cameron Fiorino | • Hollygrace Chamberlain | • Carter Newcomb |
| • Janai McCullough | • Samantha Lewis | • Andrea Parrone |
| • Sarah Stone | • Cleo McDermott | • Olivia Raschiatore |
| • James Wiater | • Marie Mekoyo-Bakou | • Andrea Roberts |
| | | • Gillian Weltman |
| | | • Caleb Wilcox |



Capital Project Update

The district is moving into its final months of the ongoing capital improvement project. Music students in the district's outstanding music programs will be utilizing instructional space designed to enhance the quality of the programs. Large instructional space will be used for ensemble rehearsals, along with lesson rooms that allow supervised quality practice time.

Hallways throughout the building were also improved with tile that is easy to clean and disinfect, lockers that accommodate the size of today's bookbags and cubby areas for students to sit.

The largest security upgrade came in the form of a single-point-of-entry for all students and visitors, from the time the school day begins until the end of each day. COVID-19 social distancing requirements currently prevent the district from exclusively using the single-point-of-entry for arrival, yet many people have commented on the impact the entryway has had in the reduction of interruptions in school offices.

The maintenance building adjacent to the ambulance corp building is anticipated to be finished by spring 2021. In addition to serving as a home to the leased school bus and maintenance machinery, it is now large enough to serve as a large shipment delivery area and storage facility, significantly reducing the amount of vehicle traffic in and around the food service loading dock area.



ER awarded Primary Project: Reimagine and Cultivate mini grant

The District is happy to share that the Elementary School was awarded \$750 by the Children's Institute as part of their Primary Project: Reimagine and Cultivate grant program!

The money from the grant will help purchase play boxes for the playroom at the Elementary School, helping to make a COVID-style Primary Project possible within the district. The grant will also help create resources to help sustain the program in the future.

Primary Project is a nationally recognized program that helps children in pre-K through third grade adjust to their environment, gain confidence, social skills, and focus on learning. Children are paired with a specially trained professional and are seen weekly for 30-40 minutes for 12-15 sessions of play, in an effort to establish positive relationships.



Welcoming Dan Friday to ER

The District is pleased to announce Dan Friday has been appointed as the districts Director of Facilities. Dan began in the role on January 4, 2021. Prior to joining East Rochester Schools, Dan served as the Director of Facilities for the North Rose-Wolcott Central School District.

"We are thrilled to bring Dan into our school community, as he is an experienced facilities director" says Superintendent James Haugh. "I know he will have a positive impact on our schools and I, along with the rest of the administrative team, look forward to working with him."

Dan says he plans to work with staff and stakeholders to ensure school operations routinely meet the needs of the school community.



Board of Education petitions coming soon

Nominating petitions to run for the Board of Education are available March 1 in the District Office, 222 Woodbine Avenue, during regular hours 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. or on the district website, erschools.org. Petitions will be accepted for board candidates through April 19, 2021, by 4:00 p.m. by Mrs. Adler. Candidates must be a qualified voter of the district, 18 years of age or older, a legal resident of the district for at least one year prior to the election on May 18, 2021, and eligible to serve in accordance with the law. For more information, please call or email Mrs. Adler at 248-6302 or Kristen.Adler@erschools.org.

Elementary Students recognize acts of kindness

During December, students at the Elementary School focused on kindness as their monthly PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support) character trait. A virtual assembly was shown to students on the first of the month, followed by various activities revolving around kindness.

For the schoolwide activity, both in-person and remote learners created Kindness Chains. The goal of the activity was to recognize others for doing something kind. Students began the project with blank paper strips they used to write an act of kindness before it was formed into a loop and added to the "kindness chain." The chains provided an opportunity for students to acknowledge that a single act of kindness contributes to the whole group and that kindness never runs out!



New Alumni Foundation Grants

Individual water bottles for all students in grades K – 8 (waiting for delivery)

Ice Cream Social for students in grades 6 – 12 who are on High Honor, Honor or Credit Roll.

My Friend's Closet Funds to supplement clothing for students in all grades

School activities are so different this year because of COVID-19. The Alumni Foundation is still meeting virtually and welcomes your grant requests. The Grant Application packet can be found on our website:

http://erschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_240312/File/Alumni/Alumni%20Foundation%20Grants/ERAF%20Grant%20Application%20Packet.pdf

East Rochester Alumni Foundation: A Look Back

The East Rochester Alumni Foundation was formed in 2005 after discussions between Peter Obourn (Class of 1959 and son of former Superintendent Lewis C. Obourn) and then-Superintendent Howard Maffucci. For months several ER alumni met to create a foundation with a mission and goals, and establish a board of directors. In 2006, the Foundation was formally incorporated and certified by the IRS to operate as a public charity.

Our mission has been to help make our East Rochester Schools the best they can be. Our goals are: to bring alumni together, to unite the schools district, the community and students of today, to raise funds and to provide grants for programs critical to the education system which are not funded by the school budget, to help build a stronger school system, a stronger community and a stronger future for all East Rochester students.

Grants are usually requested by school faculty and staff during the school year. Sometimes our Foundation Board has suggested an activity or project. To date the Foundation has been able to provide funding totaling more than \$175,000 for activities and programs to help students PreK to grade 12.

Money needed to provide grant funding has come from many sources including: donations by individuals, concerts by Cindy Miller and Kevin Conners, dinners in conjunction with the school's culinary arts program, and the annual Sam Urzetta Alumni Classic Golf Tournament.

- Generation 2: This new grant provided funds for a program pairing adult volunteers with kindergarteners for weekly get-togethers.
- T-shirts for Special Olympians and the volunteers for sports meets
- Funding to purchase materials used by our Science Olympiad teams
- F.I.T.S. (Fun in the Sun) financial assistance to allow children to take part in this summer program
- Cultural arts performances
- Funds to help with costs for the 8th grade trip to Washington D.C.
- Student of the Month backpacks and celebration pizza lunches
- Various student field trips
- Roses for Veterans
- My Friends Closet

While grants are a major part of our work, we have also enjoyed helping classmates make connections by publicizing reunions and special class events.

We are honored to be able to assist our students, community, and alumni, and look forward to continuing our work for many years to come. More information concerning our organization can be found on the district's website:

<http://erschools.org/alumni>

Submitted by Anita Mance, Foundation Board

PTA book fair moves online

The annual PTA book fair was held in November as it usually is, but was held entirely online this year! The website to shop was active from Friday, November 13 through Thursday, November 26. Throughout the book fair, teachers shared read-alouds on the district social media accounts each night, as a way of engaging students who are learning from home. Teachers featured books centered around Thanksgiving and being thankful. The book fair brought in over \$1000 in online sales!



PTA delivers letters to Santa

The ER Parent Teacher Association held a Letters to Santa drive in December, inviting students to write a letter to Santa and deliver them to Santa's mailbox, located inside the school's front office. Students who participated received a treat back from one of Santa's special elf helpers! The PTA had 84 students deliver letters to Santa's mailbox between December 7 and December 18. Students who wrote letters to Santa received wooden ornaments they were able to decorate!

Sticker fundraiser

The East Rochester Parent Teacher Association is raising funds by selling ER car window and water bottle stickers!

Order forms were sent home with students and can also be found on the district website, under "News." Students should turn completed forms in to their teacher. Stickers will then be distributed by teachers. If you have any questions, please email ERPTA2020@gmail.com.





**East Rochester Union Free
School District**

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Parent dashboard

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) has developed a Parent Dashboard to increase transparency and make information about school performance and other school-level data easier for parents and the public to access. The Parent Dashboard provides parents with information about the East Rochester Union Free School District schools. The Parent Dashboard is now available on NYSED's public data site, alongside the New York State School Report Card, and a link can also be located on the homepage of the East Rochester Union Free School District.



NYSED is currently gathering additional feedback from parents and stakeholders to guide further enhancements to the Parent Dashboard. Parents and other stakeholders are invited to explore the dashboard and provide feedback via an online feedback survey available in 17 languages. NYSED will use this feedback to identify the data that is most useful to parents and the public and to make improvements to the website.

PreK and Kindergarten registration

The East Rochester Union Free School District is enrolling children for its Universal Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten programs for the 2021-2022 school year. **Children who are four years old on December 1, 2021 are eligible to register for Pre-K. Children who are five years old on December 1, 2021 are eligible to register for Kindergarten.** We also have a wonderful Young K full-day program for students who are young at the grade level. Its intention is to give children a bridge year between our half-day Pre-K program and our full-day Kindergarten program.

Registration packets were mailed out or sent home with Pre-K students the week before February break. Information on the registration process was included in the mailing, as there will be no in-person sessions this year. Families can return the packets by mail, at the school's new single point of entry or in the black mailbox outside the district office.

Families will need to provide proof of residency, immunization and health records, as well as proof of each child's age. If you have any questions, please call the District Registrar, Jennifer Flanagan, at (585) 248-6328. **Please Note: All students currently enrolled in Universal Pre-K at East Rochester DO need to register for Kindergarten.** If you have not received a registration packet or if your child will NOT be attending ER schools, please email the District Registrar at er.registrar@erschools.org. **In addition, parents of all young District residents are asked to email the District Registrar to make sure your child is on our census, even if you don't plan to enroll him or her in UPK or Kindergarten for 2021-22.**

