

THE MOUNTAINEER

PHILIPSBURG-OSCEOLA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Welcome Back!



Hello,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 School Year. I'm so excited to have things return closer to normal. Federal regulations are going to require that facemasks continue on student transportations for every school in the nation. We have no control over that. However, facemasks will be optional in the classrooms provided that the conditions in the community stay in the low transmission range. We could still be forced to do with quarantines although I do feel that regulations will ultimately change and become less restrictive. Field trips, activities, and parental involvement will be encouraged. My

goal is to be a better communicator with our stakeholders this year. I'd like to give you a stronger voice as it pertains to your child's education. We will continue to seek input regarding the best ways to do that. I'm entering my 9th year as superintendent. Two of my children have graduated from POASD already. I have two in the system still. I'm proud of our community, but we are also always looking to improve. Thank you for your support, and may god bless you and your families.

Sincerely,
Gregg Paladina



Please visit us for Open House!

- **OME 9/9/21**
5:30-7:30 PM
- **PE 9/9/21**
6:00-8:00 PM
- **MS 9/2/21**
6:00-8:00 PM
- **HS 9/1/21**
6:00-8:00 PM

New Faces, New Roles

With the upcoming school year, the district is welcoming new hires and transitioning several familiar faces.

At the High School, Mrs. Linda Hockey was the interim head principal for the spring of '21 and has accepted the full-time position. Dr. Angela Michaels is taking on Mrs. Hockey's former role as Administra-

tive Specialist. Mrs. Elaine Selfridge, High School Learning Support teacher, has accepted the Director of Student Services position, while Mrs. Beth Sherkel moves to an elementary learning support position.

Mrs. Eva George will be assuming the role of music teacher at the elementary buildings. Ms. Kelsey Phillips will be joining the high

school as a Learning Support teacher. Mrs. Michelle Beard will be returning to the high school to serve as guidance counselor. Ms. Jamie Wagner will be teaching library at the elementary schools.

***All parents must log-in to Sapphire to complete and update Emergency Contact information. Parents no longer need a PIN to log in. Sapphire can be accessed from the District Website:**

www.pomounties.org

OME Reading Routines

OME received a state-level grant for \$10,000 through the 2021-2022 MTSS Series. This grant emphasizes PREVENTION, based upon the Science of Reading, with a focus on enhancing early literacy outcomes within Kindergarten to 2nd grade in order to achieve reading proficiency status by 3rd grade for ALL students, including students with disabilities. Our K-2 team in addition to our the Reading Specialist and Special Education teachers, with support from CIU 10 and PaTTAN consultants, will work toward fidelity of implementation of Enhanced Core

Reading Instruction (ECRI) (Tier 1) and supplemental evidence-based intervention matched to student need (Tiers 2 and 3).

ECRI is a research-based collection of instruction routines utilized as an aid for students in the acquisition of early reading skills. These *evidence-based* routines have also demonstrated the ability to close the gaps for at-risk early readers and aligns directly with the core literacy program that OME is currently using.

Our K-2 team has been utilizing the ECRI routines in conjunction with our Core Reading program, Wonders, for the past 2 years. We are excited to participate in the grant to continue to finetune our implementation of ECRI, continue to develop our MTSS process, and improve our early literacy instruction so that all our students will learn to read so that they may read to learn.

From the desk of Mr. Brian Pelka, Principal

Did you know?
The Broadcast Benefit Fund can help families struggling with internet access during the pandemic. Go to pomounties.org under "District News and Updates" for more information!

COVID 19 Relief for Schools

The Federal and State Governments have provided grant access to mitigate the financial strain that COVID 19 has placed on local public school districts. Within the parameters provided by the Department of Education and under the guidance of PO Finance Director, Mr. Tom Martin, the district will utilize the funds to provide a variety of aca-

demic, health, and safety resources.

A percentage of the funds must be allocated for filling gaps in learning due to the pandemic. The funds will also allow the district to maintain stringent disinfecting and sanitizing measures.

To ensure learning continuity, the district focused sig-

nificant efforts on technology access, ensuring that all students had a laptop and internet service to complete work during school closures and quarantine periods. The grant money will assist the district in recouping the unforeseen costs of hotspots, apps and software such as Clever and Kami, and hardware such as microphones and speakers.

Exciting New Resources at POSH



The Senior High received \$7500 from the Agriculture and Youth Organization Direct Grant Program through the PA Department of Agriculture. These funds will add a greenhouse to the existing Hydroponics program.

Another exciting addition to the Senior High will be a "Chill Room." The High-

mark Foundation awarded the school \$2,100 for the development of a space that allows students who are experiencing mental or emotional distress to "cool down." This program falls under the Highmark Foundation's Positive School Climate initiative.

Chill rooms, sometimes called sensory rooms, offer

students a quiet place with calming resources and activities. These rooms sometimes include aromatherapy, soft music or white noise, and manipulatives such as clay or kinetic sand. This awesome space will benefit all students who need a break from the fast pace of today's technology-based educational environment!

#PEPride

PE Families,

I am delighted to welcome our new and returning students and families to the 2021-2022 school year.

Philipsburg Elementary is a school known for its academic excellence, strong parent support, and dedicated staff. We expect all students, faculty, and staff to be safe, responsible, and respectful at all times.

The PE faculty and staff are knowledgeable, committed, and dedicated to the success of all of our students. We share in the belief that through a strong, active collaboration with stu-

dents, parents, guardians, and community members, we can create a safe and exciting learning environment that challenges all of our students. Each child receives a well-rounded education that is comprised of Pennsylvania Common Core and Content Standards in Science, Social Studies, English Language Arts, Mathematics, Music, Art, and Physical Education. Staff and students promote our motto, P.R.I.D.E., routinely; P for Patience, R for Respect, I for Integrity, D for Determination, and E for Excellence. It is through this effective delivery of education that all students reach their fullest potential.

The Philipsburg Elementary teachers and I are looking forward to a productive partnership with you to ensure that your children can achieve to their highest potential. We recognize that in order to be successful in school, your children need support from both the home and school. We know a strong partnership with you will make a great difference in your child's education. Thank you for giving us the amazing opportunity to educate your children. We hold this responsibility with the highest regard!

Thank you,
Mr. Justin Fye, Principal

PO Middle School News and Events

The faculty and staff at the PO Middle School are excited to welcome students in grades 6-8 to the new year! Middle School student arrival begins at 7:20 AM, and all students must be in advisory by 7:55 AM. Middle School students will go through the metal detectors and tempera-

ture checks upon arrival, so please allow extra time. Sixth graders will have the opportunity to visit the Middle School for orientation on August 11th from 1:00-4:00 PM. If you or your child, have the Middle School jitters, this is a great time to have your questions and

concerns addressed!

Principals, Mrs. Harris and Mrs. Rees, remind students that clear or mesh backpacks are required.

The MS will once again host the Great First Friday on August 27th; students should dress for outdoor team-building activities.

***All students in the school district are again eligible for free breakfast and lunch this year!**

New Emergency Notification System

Our school district has moved to a new emergency call notification system, School Messenger, for our school announcements, snow days, closures, attendance calls, etc. In order to receive our notifications, please follow the below directions to "Opt-In" to text messaging. If you have not opted in,

you will receive the automatic message below from the number 67587, to allow you another chance to opt-in:

"Philipsburg-Osceola School District messages. Reply Y to confirm, HELP 4 info. Msg&data rates may apply. Msg freq varies. schoolmessenger.com/tm"

If you receive this message, and would like to opt-in to receive text messages, simply text back the letter **Y** to confirm. If you have any questions or issues opting in, please contact our help desk at helpdesk@pomounties.org

***PE and OME teachers will be using Class Dojo for parent-teacher contacts. Please watch for more information from your child's teacher.**

Educating today.....responsible citizens tomorrow.

Philipsburg-Osceola School District
Administrative Office
200 Short St
Philipsburg, PA 16866

(814) 342-1050



Wiffle Ball Tournament to Benefit PO Students

The PO Education Foundation is proud to present the 3rd Annual 'Keno Beezer' Wiffle Ball Classic at the Elks on Saturday, August 21. The tournament is 3 person and double elimination. There will be auctions, 50/50s and raffles. Entry fee is \$75 per team which includes food and drink courtesy of the Elks. All proceeds benefit the Foundation which was established to receive the generous, tax-deductible donations made by friends of the District and to then use those gifts to improve the educational experience for all learners and in furtherance of the stated mission of the Foundation.

Interested parties can email Brian Pelka at bpelka@pomounties.org or call 814-343-4105

Where can I get up-to-date school information?

Osceola Mills Elementary

400 Coal St
Osceola Mills, PA 16666
(814) 343-4105
Principal: Mr. Brian Pelka
bpelka@pomounties.org

Philipsburg Elementary

1810 Black Moshannon Rd
Philipsburg, PA 16866
(814) 342-2870
Principal: Mr. Justin Fye
jfye@pomounties.org

Philipsburg-Osceola Middle School

200 Short St
Philipsburg, PA 16866
(814) 342-4906
Head Principal: Mrs. Susan Harris
sharris@pomounties.org
Assistant Principal: Mrs. Kelly Rees
krees@pomounties.org

Philipsburg-Osceola High School

502 Philips St
Philipsburg, PA 16866
(814) 342-1521
Head Principal: Mrs. Linda Hockey
lhockey@pomounties.org
Assistant Principal: Ms. Julie Bravin
jbravin@pomounties.org

WWW.POMOUNTIES.ORG
