

City School District Tonawanda

A publication of the Tonawanda City School District Board of Education

WINTER 2011

iPads Make Learning Fun



In order to learn new concepts, students of the Tonawanda Middle/High school are ushering in a new technological age when it comes to education. Recently, students successfully used iPads for their classwork. Now, some students are advancing to electronic exams and prepared for their mid-terms using the iPad technology. It all began in Mrs. Ruppert's class with an assignment which required students to know four different equations before moving on to more complex concepts.



The more involved students become, the more they will really learn the information. How does a teacher do that? By speaking the students' language. Children have an amazing capacity of adopting and adapting to new technology. For some older individuals new technology may present a challenge, but for students it is picked up naturally. That's why our district just unveiled iPads in the classroom to help students in the learning process.



Students are also reviewing material using CPS clickers, a set of remote control answering devices detected by a receiver. Teachers write their own questions and students get immediate feedback whether their answers are correct.

Another piece of technology used in the classroom is the SMARTBoard, a very high-tech electronic blackboard.

There are a variety of activities available on the SMARTBoard which will be used to prepare

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THS Athletics Basement Renovation

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who helped make the High School Basement Project 2010 possible. There are many needs in the athletics and physical education department. One of those that stood out was improving the conditions of the basement. In teaming with Joe Giarrizzo, administrator for business and financial services, and Paul Maziarz, director of facilities and operations, we were able to create an educational environment that was once thought of as an eyesore. Major lighting improvements, equipment updates and restructuring of storage areas have given our middle and high school students an opportunity to take advantage of a space that not many school districts can compete with. We would also like to take the opportunity to thank Mark Kingston and the high school engineers and maintenance staff for their tremendous help, as well as Brad Halgash, coordinator of athletics and physical education.



District Planning Update

- **February 2009** Tonawanda City School District Board of Education voted unanimously to close Highland Elementary School.
- **March 2009** Tonawanda City School District Board of Education approved a plan to formulate Community District Reconfiguration Committee assigned the task of determining the most educationally beneficial configuration of the existing three elementary schools: Fletcher, Mullen and Riverview.
- **April 2009** Tonawanda City School District Board of Education accepted the recommendation from the Reconfiguration Committee to use remaining elementary schools in the following fashion: Mullen/Riverview, Grades Prek through 3, and Fletcher, Grades 4 and 5.
- **Summer 2009** Tonawanda City School District administrative and support staff orchestrated closure of Highland and re-equipped Mullen/Riverview and Fletcher to operate in new configuration.
- **Fall 2009** Tonawanda City School District opened elementary schools in new configuration.
- **Fall 2009** Tonawanda City School District Board of Education designed three community/staff Task Forces to review specific long range concepts: sale of properties, relocation of Clint Small, and future utilization of elementary schools.
- **November 2009** Fiscal Task Force reported and recommended to the Board of Education to proceed with sale of 202 Broad Street (former district office building—for sale sign is now in place) and provide the city first access and/or refusal for potential use of Highland Elementary School.

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TONAWANDA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Planning Update

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- **December 2009** Clint Small Task Force reported and recommended that the Tonawanda City School District proceed with planning to relocate existing Clint Small Stadium to land adjacent to the high school.
- **January 2010** Facilities Task Force reported and recommended that the Tonawanda City School District proceed in planning to move to a single elementary school campus.
- **January 27, 2010** Tonawanda City School District forwarded to the State Education Department a letter of intent to proceed with development of a capital project to develop a single elementary school campus (site to be determined). A letter of intent was also included which will facilitate the relocation of the athletic facilities.
- **Week of February 1st** Tonawanda City School District administrative staff conducted meetings with legal counsel, bond counsel and fiscal advisors in an effort to formulate plans for future capital project.
- **February 11, 2010** Tonawanda City School District mailed RFQ to architectural/engineering firms for athletic facility and consolidated elementary complex. Also placed an ad in Tonawanda News and Buffalo News for Saturday, Feb. 13 edition.
- **August 25, 2010** RFPs sent to architectural firms for athletic complex and modifications to secondary complex with due date of Sept. 24, 2010.
- **October 12, 2010** Architectural presentations to board by four firms for athletic facility and secondary complex modification – phase one.
- **November 2010** RFPs sent to architectural firms for consolidated elementary complex.
- **December 8, 2010** Architectural presentations to board by three firms for consolidated elementary complex – phase two
- **December 21, 2010** Board directs Superintendent to proceed with phase one and to retain and enter into contract with Wendel Duchscherer as the architects for the athletic facility and related secondary complex modifications.

A Message from the Superintendent:

Dear Residents:

Winter is upon us and many of us are enjoying frolicking in the snow. By the time you have had a chance to read this edition; the “First” Annual Winter Fest will have successfully debuted. This joint effort between the Tonawanda PTSA and Tonawanda Recreation Department with assistance from the Tonawanda City School District and City of Tonawanda was a wonderful way in which to celebrate the season, get some fresh air and join with community members in celebrating our connected community. A big thank you to everyone who helped.

The Tonawanda City School District has made a major commitment to addressing the ongoing dilemma of bullying. Several innovative programs are being piloted in our schools with the hoped for outcome of better relationships between student-to-student, adult-to-adult, and student-to-adult. The staffs of our school buildings have worked very diligently, and we are excited by the possibilities of designing schools whereby everyone will feel safe, accepted, cared for and nurtured for who they are. Kudos to our staffs!

The 2011-2012 School Operating Budget is an ongoing process. The Board of Education, administration, staff, and members of the Budget Advisory Team are hard at work developing a budget that will reflect the current status of the District’s required and mandated needs, as well as attention to the expectations of the community.

One only needs to read the newspaper to realize that the fiscal situation impacting everyone is grave and school systems are not immune. However, with thoughtful planning, by making difficult and unpopular decisions during the past few years, we strongly believe that the Tonawanda City School District is much better positioned to deal with the continued fiscal uncertainties.

The Board of Education has been working to develop plans that are believed to be productive, positive, long-term fiscal and programmatic strategies that will ensure solvency for the District into the foreseeable future. No one has a crystal ball ... but there is optimism that by following the path that has been laid out, the Tonawanda City School District will maintain forward momentum and continue to address the mission of preparing your children and our students for bright futures.

Thank you.
Sincerely,



Whitney K. Vantine, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



Enrollment/Residency Policy 7132 Updated and Approved in the District

As part of the District’s ongoing Board of Education Policy update and procedural adjustments following the New York State Comptroller’s Audit recommendations, the policy impacting student enrollment, particularly for Non-Resident students has been amended and approved for immediate implementation. Non-Resident students who are no longer district residents will be allowed to remain enrolled in the District with a pro-rated tuition charge. Students who no longer reside in the district are automatically, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, classified as a Non-Resident student and tuition charges shall be applied. Annual Non-Resident student tuition rates are:

General Education Students: K-6th grade- \$4,303/year; 7-12th grade - \$5,375/year.
Special Education Students: K-6th grade- \$14,286/year; 7-12th grade- \$15,358/year.

TONAWANDA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Registration

It's hard to believe but we are already looking ahead to the 2011-2012 academic year. Now is the time that you, as parents, need to begin the process of registering your little ones for prekindergarten and kindergarten. Here are some things you need to know.

Prekindergarten: Applications, available as of March 1, are available at the locations listed below. Completed applications must be postmarked or received at the district administration building at 100 Hinds Street by March 16, 2011. Notification and acceptance (acceptance based on a first-come, first-serve basis) will occur approximately by May 2, contingent upon approval from the NYS Education Department.

- Fletcher Elementary School, 555 Fletcher Street (694-7694)
- Riverview Elementary School, 55 Taylor Drive (694-7697)
- Mullen Elementary School, 130 Syracuse Street (694-6805)
- Tonawanda City School District Office, 100 Hinds Street



There is no tuition cost for the program. Parents must provide transportation. Prekindergarten classes will be held starting September 2011 at Riverview and Mullen Elementary schools and Child's Creative Development Center with morning and afternoon sessions five days a week. Children must be four on or before December 1, 2011, and not eligible for kindergarten in September 2011.

Kindergarten: Parents of children expected to enter kindergarten in the Tonawanda City School District in September 2011 can register them at the district administration building at 100 Hinds Street on Feb. 28 - March 4 for the Mullen Attendance Zone and on March 7-11 for the Riverview Attendance Zone (please visit www.tonawandacsd.org to view the zone map).

At the time of registration, parents/persons in parental relationship will be required to furnish:

- Child's original birth certificate with an affixed seal (copies are not permitted)
- Health/immunization records from your child's pediatrician/physician
- Documentation to verify parental residency in the Tonawanda City School District
 - NYS driver's license/passport or NYS non-driver's license photo ID and
 - 1 document containing name and address such as a mortgage/tax bill, rental agreement or notarized statement from landlord and
 - 1 additional document containing name and address of parent/guardian

Parents/Guardians must complete a student registration form (a blank form will be available at registration appointment or on the website: www.tonawandacsd.org – click pupil services tab and click *Kindergarten Registration link* on side menu panel)

Questions regarding prekindergarten or kindergarten registration should be directed to District Registrar at 694-7690. **For more information, contact Robert Breidenstein, 694-7684.**

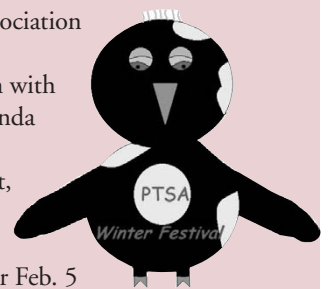
Three Board Member Openings

There will be three openings for the Board of Education for the May 17, 2011 budget vote. Two of the Board members will serve a three-year term commencing July 1, 2011 and expiring June 30, 2014, and one member will serve a two-year term commencing July 1, 2011 and expiring June 30, 2013. Interested candidates can pick up applications from the Board Office located at 100 Hinds Street between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Petitions must be signed by at least 100 eligible/qualified voters. Completed petitions must be filed with the Board Clerk not later than April 27 at 5 p.m. Qualifications for School Board Membership: you must be a citizen of the United States, at least 18 years of age, resident of the district for one school year prior to the election (before May 17, 2011) and be able to read and write.

A First for Tonawanda –

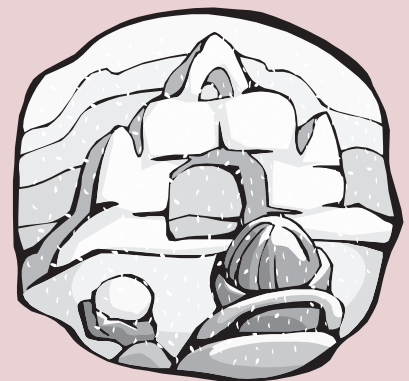
Winter Fest 2011!

In what is planned to be an annual event, Winter Fest is kicking off in our fair city. The Tonawanda Parent-Teacher-Student Association (PTSA), in conjunction with the Tonawanda Recreation Department, has scheduled the event for Feb. 5 from 12-6 p.m.



This free community event features team snow fort building, team snow sculpture building, and snow volleyball (weather permitting). There is also a mouth-watering Chili cook-off to be judged by some very special guests.

Throughout these frosty events, in an effort to warm up participants, several other activities have been planned. They include an auction in the high school cafeteria, movies in the auditorium, activities in the high school pool, uncompetitive snow play in the track area, activities in all three gyms, as well as food and drink in the middle school cafeteria. Last, but not least, is the ever popular Dance Dance Revolution. Activities this diverse are sure to leave Fest friends eager for next year!



MULLEN SCHOOL NEWS

Mullen Donates over 300 Pounds of Candy to Troops Overseas!

Mullen School teamed up with Dr. Truong of Crosspoint Dentistry and Operation Gratitude to participate in a candy buy-back program. Operation Gratitude annually sends 100,000 care packages to troops overseas. These packages contain approximately 50 assorted snacks, toiletries, entertainment items and personal letters. The candy is added in by the handfuls to fill in every space in the box.



Men from the 10th Mt. Division, 4th Brigade, 3rd Squadron of the 89th Cavalry, Medic Unit HHT who were recipients of some of the candy.

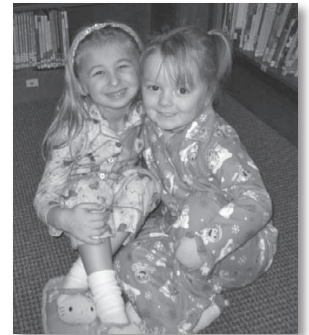
Operation Gratitude Founder Carolyn Blashek said, "The troops give the candy to the children in Afghanistan and Iraq as part of the 'winning hearts and minds' strategy. Often the children will provide critical information in return, prompting one Marine to write: "You are not just putting smiles on our faces, you are saving our lives."

The program was explained to the students through a series of letters that were sent home and in morning messages. The collection took place in the gym and lasted for three days. The first few pieces of candy were brought in on a Friday and after the official first day they had already collected about 80 pounds of candy. According to Jim Balcom, the physical education teacher and candy collector, the students were motivated by hearing the running total weight. It became a school competition that involved everyone. How much could Mullen collect? Day two closed with 175 pounds collected, and everyone thought there would just be a few stragglers on Wednesday.

You can imagine everyone's surprise on the final collection day when 125 pounds of additional candy came through the door to bring the grand total to 300 pounds. Along with the candy donation, students decorated shoe boxes, drew pictures and wrote letters to the troops. For all their hard work, Dr. Truong and a few generous WNY businesses, provided a pizza party for all Mullen students! It truly was a wonderful experience for everyone.

PJ Day Supports Make-A-Wish Effort

Pajamas at school? Yes! For a good cause, Mullen Elementary School students were encouraged to wear their pajamas for one special day. Mullen School is sponsoring "Spirit Days" for students and staff to wear unusual clothes in an effort to raise money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation.



Prekindergarten students Lauren Kisloski and Danielle Polley in their sleepwear.

The school participated in Crazy Hat Day, Hawaiian Day, Crazy Hair Day, Pajama Day, Rock Star Day and Holiday Spirit Day. On these days, everyone has been encouraged to dress in keeping with the special theme. All participants were asked to donate one dollar, or any amount of their choosing, to the fund to help grant a wish for a child with a life-threatening illness. An on-going fundraiser allows students to purchase magnetic stars, paper stars and Make-A-Wish bracelets. All money raised from the sale of these items goes directly to the Make-A-Wish Foundation. More "Spirit Days" will be scheduled in the spring along with other fundraising events.

Mullen School Hosts Family Sports Night

Mullen Elementary School hosted its second Sports Night of the school year on Jan. 13 and, once again, it was a great activity-filled success. All Mullen students and their families are welcome to attend these events and on average 50 or so people have taken advantage of the opportunity. Various sport and exercise related equipment is available for use with the night directed by the children and their families. The PTA provides snacks and drinks and only requires that the children come with adult supervision.

Books Rule!

An award-winning musical entertainment for children, Books Rule, was presented by the Smudge Fundaes at Mullen School. Students at Mullen were active participants in a program that sent the message that reading is 'cool'. Catchy, upbeat songs, fun costumes and props were used to engage the students.

Betty Book (Suzanne Nicks) and Penny Pencil (Sandie Thomson) involve students in songs and dances about topics that include science, math, geography, spelling and book elements.

Nicks and Thomson (a.k.a. Smudge Fundaes), Canadian musicians, are the recipients of many awards including 2009 Canadian Children's Group of the Year.



RIVERVIEW SCHOOL NEWS

Traveling Around the World



Mrs. Brady's first-grade class shows off their passports during a break in the holiday travel activity held in the gym.

Riverview students had an opportunity to travel around the world this past December. That's right; they boarded the Holiday Express plane, suitcase in hand! Their passports were scrutinized at customs before getting stamped as they entered each country to learn about their holiday traditions. Everyone was able to bring back souvenirs from this wonderful journey.

Their trip began in Italy where they learned about La Befana, the Christmas Witch. From there, it was up to Germany. Did you know that many of our own traditions came from there? Christmas trees, gingerbread, and even Silent Night all originated in Germany. Students also learned how they hide a pickle in their tree and the first one to find it gets a gift.

Next, it was off to sunny Mexico. Don't worry - they had sunblock! There they saw Las Posada, a celebration/parade in Mexico. They had beautiful poinsettia plants and fun piñatas too! The trip concluded with a stop in Holland. Students couldn't believe they wear those shoes made from wood! St. Nicholas and his horse have to fill all those shoes in one night!

While away, the students got to taste a little piece of each country at an international food fair.

In preparing for this event, each grade level selected a country and researched its customs and traditions. Students rotated, sharing their information and learning from each other. The trait of this month of generosity was surely felt! When it was all finished, and with suitcases all filled up, they made it back just in time to celebrate their own traditions for the holidays. Many parents volunteered to help execute this activity. A special thanks goes out to all the customs agents, security and tour guides (aka parent volunteers!)

Generosity: Trait of the Month

"The Giving Tree" – a book with a lesson – helped teach Riverview students the importance of giving and sharing with others. Each month a different book is selected to help the students learn different traits. The trait for December was generosity – appropriate for the time of the year. Students and staff sought to implement the sharing message in the book. Trees in the entry way were decorated with socks and donated to a local charity. Teachers participated in the angel project to help families during the holidays. Some classes made cards and shared them with a nursing home in the area. An assembly to promote generosity was performed by Mrs. Lunetta's prekindergarten class with music from Mrs. Urbaniak.

Over at Fletcher Elementary School, students have been spreading the warmth of the holiday season by doing acts of kindness as part of "Rachel's Challenge." For every act of kindness a student carries out, one more link is added to a paper chain that will symbolize the spreading of kindness and compassion Fletcher students have shown toward others.

In addition to "Rachel's Challenge," Fletcher students have diligently collected non-perishable food items for the local food bank. Their acts of compassion toward others have a far-reaching impact toward helping those less fortunate. Fletcher students have also gone above and beyond by collecting nearly \$3,500 to donate to the Make-A-Wish Foundation. The generosity of the Fletcher students symbolize what the holiday season is all about.

Gobble Up a Good Book

Students at Riverview participated in a reading competition during the month of November. Every time second- or third-graders completed reading a chapter book, they entered their name in a drawing. Also, every time kindergarteners or first-graders finished a book, they also put their name in a basket. We are pleased to announce that 22 books were given away before Thanksgiving! Starting and actually finishing a book is an important habit to form!



Pictured left to right: Brooklyn Jopp, Aaron Harding, Carly Liebel and Alana Gely.

FLETCHER SCHOOL NEWS

Fletcher Students Embrace “Rachel’s Challenge”



Principal, Dr. John McKenna, speaking to students about “Rachel’s Challenge”

The students of Fletcher Elementary School are setting the stage for instilling good will toward others, promoting acts of kindness and getting the word out that bullying behavior will not be accepted.

All of these important messages are part of a nationwide movement and campaign called “Rachel’s Challenge” born out of the tragedy at Columbine High School. Rachel was one of the high school students who died during the tragedy. Out of this loss, a family friend of Rachel’s, Rachel’s brother and her father are

turning their loss into action by going around the country to let students of other schools know about Rachel’s story.

Knowing that one person can have an impact on others, Rachel’s friend, brother and father have gone out to spread the word about being kind to others, accepting others for the wonderful people they are and not bullying others. Rachel was the type of person to look out for others and if someone needed a friend, she tried to be that friend. She tried to have an impact on others’ lives.

So, here at Fletcher School, led by principal, Dr. John McKenna, students and teachers are striving to have an impact on others and are hosting their own “chain reaction” of acts of kindness. A paper chain will be created and for every kind act someone does, another link in the chain will be added. In addition, all students will get a chance to pledge their support to this cause by signing a “Rachel’s Challenge” banner.

Rachel, who also kept a diary or journal, has sometimes been compared to Anne Frank. Each young girl hoped to make a difference in the world and wrote about their acts to accomplish such in their personal journals. With so many ways to show kindness to others and by not allowing bullying behavior in our school, many of our students are sure to follow in such positive footsteps.

Fletcher’s Music Program Continues to Flourish

The music department at Fletcher Elementary School brought the holiday spirit to fellow students and district families with performances of their winter concert repertoire.

The concerts featured band and chorus performances at both the fourth- and fifth-grade levels. The fourth- and fifth-grade bands were led by Amanda Amigone, fourth-grade chorus by Joanne Jasinski, and fifth-grade chorus by Amanda Urbaniak.



Fletcher School’s fifth-grade band

Concert participants demonstrated their growing musical talents with a variety of holiday songs that were enjoyable to learn and had a pleasant blend of all different types of genres and backgrounds. Students also learned a great deal about playing and singing techniques and the history of these songs during their preparation for the concert.

The instrumental and choral programs continue to flourish with 95 percent participation from Fletcher’s student population. A majority of the students enrolled in the program participate in both performing ensembles appropriate to their grade level. Fletcher students are provided with the wonderful opportunity of being involved with a large chorus or band, and it gives the school a great sense of unity.

“I’ll take the Incas for \$100!”

Fifth-grade students at Fletcher Elementary School are having fun and are definitely in-“quiz”itive as they learn about the ancient civilizations of the Aztecs, Mayas and Incas.

As part of our flexibly scheduled library program, classes are able to schedule time in the library



Anthony Hapka and Victoria Kurdziel research the Incas.

to use the library’s resources to research information on the ancient cultures. Teaming up with the library, students in Karen Burgett’s and Susan Bogner’s fifth-grade class were divided into pairs selecting one of the three civilizations (Aztecs, Mayas or Incas) to focus their research on. The students then began their research into learning about their assigned civilization’s religion, government, daily life and other accomplishments or achievements using the library’s resources for information.



Thinking of a way to integrate technology with library research skills, Jennifer Patterson, library media specialist, thought of a unique way to put a “fun twist” on student’s learning. She had each pair of students “team up” with other students who had the same chosen civilization in the class. A team of students was selected to create an interactive Jeopardy Game that was played on the school’s smartboards.

After completing their research, teams of students worked together to create the questions and answers that were asked during their self-created, computer directed Jeopardy game. Each game came complete with full sound effects and “Jeopardy music.” That made their game feel like the real game on TV! What a wonderful way to teach a lesson, learn about ancient cultures and have fun all at the same time!

MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL NEWS



Left to right: Sarah Bond, Kayla LoGrasso, Chris Fitzgerald, Ms. Mary Dischner, Mrs. Georgiann Warnes, and Amelia Imagna.

Programs in place to prevent bullying

School can be a scary place: not everyone is nice, and it's not easy to make friends. It used to be that students who had difficulty socially in school were able to find relief from their anguish when the school day ended and they were at home. Sadly, home is no longer a refuge due to technology such as texting, social networks, emails and blogs.

The Tonawanda School District is revitalizing the Mentoring Program using new techniques to reach students in need. Currently, 40 district mentors who have received specialized training are working with the students every day. All staff are being educated on how to recognize bullied students and what action to take.

Recently, the Middle/High School held an assembly promoting Rachel's Challenge, which carries on the message of Rachel Joy Scott, the first student to be tragically killed at Columbine High School. Since the assembly, the high school has started a Friend of Rachel's Club (FOR Club) to carry on the energy and emotion ignited by the assembly.

So far, the club personalized holiday cards for every staff member in the high school and will soon start a chain with a link added for every act of kindness committed, creating a "Chain Reaction" of kindness. Ms. Dischner and Mrs. Warnes are the club's advisors in the high school. For more information regarding the middle school's participation in Rachel's Challenge see the article entitled "Chain Links: Creating Chain Reactions in the Middle School."

Eighth graders are finalists in writing contest

The middle school eighth graders recently competed in the NCTE Promising Young Writers Contest. Two students submitted entries that will be going on to the national competition. Those students are Erin Burris and Jon Tabor. The following students received Honorable Mention: Jesalyn Cala, Marina Tighe, and Meghan Thomas.

This year's theme, "Looking for the Real Me," is one that connects closely with adolescents' lives. Many eighth graders invest a great deal of time and energy in their "search for self," and the theme of looking for one's real self often appears in adolescent literature and in teen's own writing.



Left to Right: Jon Tabor, Meghan Thomas, Marina Tighe, Jesalyn Cala, Erin Burris.

Chain Links: Creating Chain Reactions in the Middle School

Tonawanda Middle School has instituted Chain Links, a middle school club associated with Rachel's Challenge. The group has made a pledge to carry out random acts of kindness and try to eliminate bullying in the middle school. The goal of Chain Links is to create a chain reaction by promoting and rewarding random acts of kindness they see from their peers.

The club's officers are: Liz Roetzer, president; Melissa Lorich, vice president; Kari Kane, secretary; Chezney Belcher, treasurer. Other members include Sam Armenia, Kari Kane, Gaby Canino, Sarah Szortyka, Whitney Zimmermann, Rachel Warthling and Heather Farnham. The club advisor is Shawn Lodovico.



Left to right, front row: Sara Szortyka, Melissa Lorich. Second row: Kari Kane, Rachel Warthling, Liz Restzer and Whitney Zimmerman. Back row: Tristan Boling, Chezney Belcher, Laurenz Jefferson, Jon Tabor and Sam Armenia.

Congratulations January 2011 Graduates



Pictured l-r: Superintendent Whitney K. Vantine, Ed.D., Kelsey Przybylsz, Timothy Haberer, Brittany Demchik, Justin Bishop, Cassandra Dabek, Mark Metzger, Valerie Boye, & Board President Sharon Stuart

Board of Education:

Ms. Sharon Stuart, President
Ms. Jennifer Mysliwy, Vice-President
Mrs. Joyce Hogenkamp
Ms. Elizabeth Olka
Mr. Demelt Shaw
Mrs. Jackie Smilinich

RESIDENT

HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

Traveling the World from the Comfort of the Classroom

Students at the Tonawanda City School District will soon have a new way to learn about our large world. Instead of just listening to a teacher talk about a new concept, students will be able to see, first-hand, a baby gorilla coming into the world or be able to speak with a NASA astronaut about what it is like to have a job that is “out of this world”.

Even with the economic times we live in, our district is looking for innovative ways to give our students a competitive edge, using 21st century technology as they continue to learn. We can now do this with the new Tandberg video cart at the Middle-High School complex. This unit is cost-efficient and allows for all of our students to virtually learn from all parts of the world. Unlike Skype, which allows for one-on-one video chatting, the Tandberg allows entire classes to be part of the experience.

Studies show that students learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process and when it involves concepts they can connect with the real world. Students will now be able to understand the answer to the question, “When will I ever use this?”

Mrs. Scullion, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, spearheaded the effort to bring the video cart to the district. She says that using technology in schools opens a new world for learners.

“Today’s student is very comfortable with technology. We need to speak their language and change how we teach. We are expecting more of our students than ever before. We must give them every tool to succeed,” she said.

iPads Make Learning Fun

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vocabulary review for students. They will be able to touch and electronically move around terms to match their proper definitions. There is also the new high-tech version of PowerPoint, which, rather than being one big presentation, has chapters like vocabulary, class notes or video clips arranged by topic. Students can access it themselves and navigate through the chapters which have been created by teacher Miss Walter as a way for students to be directly engaged and in control of their learning. Five different pieces of technological educational tools were used for review in practical chemistry, with two pieces new this year.

What we have already seen are students interested in learning. We have seen students helping other students. They are engaged in the lesson. They are learning new concepts in an almost effortless way – in a way they want to learn. This is just another example of preparing our students for the technological revolution sweeping our country and giving them an edge when it comes to competing in a global economy.

Students Honored for Leadership, Academics and Character

Quality Students named for 2010-2011

The following students have been named Quality Students for 2010-2011: Sarah Bond, Srdjan Dragojevic, Sara Gillmeister, Alyssa Hughes, Amelia Imagna, Scott Laing, Jeffrey Lavin, J. Isaac Lewis, Kayla Lograsso, Cassandra Marcaccio, Erin McDonald, Jordan McGregor, Jennifer Rayner, Shairi Smith, Carissa Stuart, Kathryn Stuart, Michael Stuber III, Nicholas Turton, Joshua Vaccaro and Rebecca Warthling.

NHS Inductees 2010

The following students were inducted this year into the National Honor Society, Tonawanda Senior High School Chapter: seniors, Joshua Barber, Srdjan Dragojevic, Kristin Harris, Jeffrey Lavin, J. Isaac Lewis, Erin McDonald, Kaitlynn Moore, and juniors, Jessica Amico, Devin Ayotte, Valerie Booth, Emily Christman, Jeremy Driscoll, Madeline Haas, Jamie Idziak, Megan Kocher, David Mara, Jessica Maulucci, Rachel Neumann, Kendra O’Connor, Colin Rebo, Allison Scudder, Clifford Tompkins III and Joseph Zack.