



## Getting them ready

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The mission and vision of Skaneateles Central Schools is not merely to educate, but to help get students READY for college, work, and life. This goal can be seen in so much of what we do, starting with those first days at Waterman and including the annual fifth grade visit to Orenda Springs where life skills are the focus and set the stage for the entire year. It includes getting students out and into the world to do internships and shadowing. See more on page 3.

### Diverse new hires:

This mission of readiness was at the core as administrators interviewed and hired the 22 people featured in this newsletter. The positions involve the filling of retirements where needed, the creation of different positions based on changing needs, and a revival of some positions that were previously cut.

A common thread in the backgrounds of the new hires is their diversity of interest and experience.

"This will allow us to bring the world to our campus ... as we also build experiences to take the campus to the world," said Superintendent Ken Slentz. The hiring choices also reflect the increasing differences in today's learners and changes in the needs of our students -- with a keen awareness that we are preparing students for a world that is changing so quickly that tomorrow's jobs don't yet exist today.



*First day at Waterman: First graders practice introducing themselves to others.*



*First week at State Street: Fifth graders learn important character traits at the ropes course.*



*First day at the Middle School: Sixth graders use interviewing and listening skills.*



*Activities Fair at the High School: Students learn about 21 different clubs and organizations available to them.*

### **Board of Education**

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## Arts Coordinator

**Judy Morgan** fills the new part-time position of Interim

Coordinator of the Visual and Performing Arts. She started her career as a teacher of gifted children. She



retired after 17 years from the East Syracuse Minoa Central School District where she held the positions of elementary principal, Director of Instruction and Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Accountability.

During the last five years, she worked as a consultant facilitating strategic plans for schools, supporting school administrators through leadership coaching and working in schools in need of academic improvement. She is the president of the New York State Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). Judy lives in Skaneateles, where she moved with her husband five years ago to be closer to their daughter and family in Weedsport.

## Humanities Coordinator

Michael Caraccio is the new secondary humanities coordinator. He comes from the West Genesee School District where he served as assistant principal; academic dean overseeing all departments in grades 9-12 (for six years); and, most recently, 11th grade principal.



Education is Mike's second career. He got a BS in Business Administration with a major in Finance and a minor in Sociology from the University at Albany and worked in consumer finance for seven years.

He realized his passion for education while taking additional courses to further his career. He got a Master's degree in Education and taught high school math in Marcellus for seven years while taking courses to earn his administrative certificates.

Last year Mike and his wife Beth (Van Nostrand)

purchased a home here after many years of wanting to get back to the small, close-knit community where she grew up. It was the best decision for their three young children, who have been welcomed with open arms by the school community, he said. He is eager to be a part of the district professionally, and to leverage his experiences "to support the wonderful educators, students and families in our community."

Being the humanities coordinator is especially exciting for Mike.

"I'm interested in all subjects and the pursuit of continued learning. Acquiring the skills to communicate effectively along with an appreciation for reading/research, history and culture are so important in today's ever-changing world."

Outside of school Mike enjoys time with his family, working on home projects, running, golfing and getting together with friends new and old.

## District Business Official

**Joseph Butler** has joined the district as business official after serving last year as the interim official. In



addition to budget planning, contract negotiations, and performance management, Joe's duties include mentoring new business office staff members. He has 40 years

in the business, including 27 years as business manager in the Liverpool district. Most recently, he has worked as an internal claims auditor in the East Syracuse Minoa Central School District. He has a BS in Accounting, an MBA, and a Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Administration. In his free time, Butler can be found at Song Mountain skiing and instructing.

## Interim Director of Pupil Personnel Services

**Linda Rice** is part-time Interim Director of Pupil Personnel Services, after a 36-year career in education, most recently as superintendent of the Union Springs Central School District (2004-14). She also served in a variety of administrative roles at Weedsport Central Schools. She began her career in special



education at Jordan Elbridge, where she taught for 18 years. She is the mother of four Skaneateles graduates.

“These experiences as educator and parent have allowed me to view the educational process through a wide variety of lenses. I sincerely believe that all children can learn, and it is the responsibility of every member of the school

community – parents, teachers, staff, administrators, and community members – to ensure that each child reaches his or her full potential. I envision my role as assisting the district in ensuring that all children continue to receive the outstanding educational experiences and opportunities that my children had in Skaneateles.”

## District Treasurer

**Connor Brown** is the new district treasurer. He comes to SCS after several years in the central business office of OCM BOCES doing treasury



and other accounting work for school districts. He has a Business Administration degree with a concentration in management from the College of Saint Rose in Albany. He likes golfing and spending time with family and friends.

Connor is “very excited to have the honor of working here and meeting new people.” He started his career working in a bank and never considered working in education until a customer who worked at BOCES encouraged him to consider a change.

## Internships provide learning outside school walls

Students gain real world exposure to careers through internships and shadowing.

This summer students met some of the country’s best classical and jazz musicians at the Skaneateles Festival.

Five students had paid internships to help with logistics at the new venue at Anyela’s Vineyard. They were also able to shadow teacher Corey Riley in sound engineering as he served as technical assistant in sound and lighting. Riley has been active in developing sound engineering courses in the high school since joining the district as middle school band teacher in 2014. Through the month of



*Teacher Corey Riley, Jonathan Niebuhr, Ethan Goldstein, Jackie Riley, Ranaan Meyer (Basist, Time for Three), Alex Flanagan, Charles Yang (Violin, Time for Three), Ben Blackwell, Nicolas Kendall (Violin, Time for Three), Alex Van Riper, Maddie Van Riper, Joel Atella (Tour Manager)*

August, students observed and shadowed talented musicians who came to the Festival from all over the world. They worked with Riley at Saturday concerts and helped the festival’s recording engineer

with recording. Experiences like this help some students confirm the pathway to their passion, while others realize a path is not for them – which is just as valuable.

# Schools are enriched with increasing diversity

An increase in students whose first language is not English led to the hiring of a full time English as a New Language teacher. (Once called ESL, it is now ENL). Amy Tormey teaches 13 students in grades 2-10. Their families are from Guatemala, Mexico, Brazil, Switzerland, China, and Iraq. Their primary languages are: Spanish, Portuguese, Swiss German, Mandarin Chinese, and Arabic. The district also has students with home languages such as Korean and Filipino but who are currently not in need of ENL services. In addition, SCS has exchange students who speak Danish, Spanish, German, and French.

“We have nine or more different home languages represented by our students, Tormey said. “All together in our district, we have the enrichment of about 20 Multiple Language learners (MLLs) which includes ‘Ever ELLs’ (English Language Learners -- students who were once in an ENL program). “We are starting to reflect the demographic trends of ELLs in NY State, but on a smaller



*Sophomore Yorvin Solis-Samayoa from Guatemala studies for one period each morning with Amy Tormey. The signs on the left side of the wall say “Welcome to School” in Spanish, German, Danish, French, Chinese, Korean, Arabic, Portuguese, and Filipino.*

scale. For example, the top three ELL home languages in NYS are: Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic.”

## District welcomes exciting new staff

**Amy Tormey** teaches English as a New Language (ENL) in grades K-12. Before joining the Skaneateles Schools staff, she worked at



Cayuga Onondaga BOCES as an itinerant teacher for 13 years, providing services for Skaneateles, Jordan Elbridge, Weedsport, and Auburn (mostly Seward Elementary). She has a BA in Psychology from Wells College and an MS in Second Language Education from SUNY Cortland. Previously, she taught EFL for 14 years in Italy. Her two children are graduates of SCS. Amy is a member of Skaneateles Rotary and enjoys reading, cycling, hiking, swimming, and kayaking.

**Jennifer Capozzi** is a special education teacher at Waterman School. She has a BA in Music and Spanish from SUNY Oswego and an MS in Special Education from Syracuse University. In addition, she has an Endorsement in Teaching English as a Second Language from Regis University in Denver, CO. Before coming to Skaneateles, Jennifer taught inclusive early childhood programs through Jowonio School in Syracuse and also taught Special Education and ESL in Colorado. She keeps busy with her three boys and enjoys spending time in outdoor activities with her family and friends.



**Alexis Abdo** is a new full-time elementary substitute teacher. She earned her BS and MS degrees in Physical Education from SUNY Cortland and Canisius College. Alexis coordinates the Sensory Integration Motor Sensory Lab at SUNY Cortland, and supervises Physical Education majors through community-based service learning projects. Previously, she was the Director of the Cortland Homer After School Mentorship Program and taught PE in the Onondaga Central School District. Alexis loves spending time with her family, her dog, cheering on the Yankees, kayaking, fishing, and hiking in the Adirondacks.



## New staff, continued

**Lisa McGlynn** is a teacher assistant at both Waterman and State Street Schools. She has a BA from St. Lawrence University and certification in elementary education from SUNY Cortland. She has four children: one in college near Boston and three in Skaneateles Schools. She loves to travel, exercise with friends, read, and take long walks with her dogs.



**Helen Glowacki** is a kindergarten teacher at Waterman School. She has a BA in English/Psychology from Union College and an MA in Elementary Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. Helen taught kindergarten in Manhattan for five years before moving to Skaneateles. She taught the 4-year-olds at Holy Trinity Preschool for 2 years and then later was Director at Holy Trinity for 5 years. She lives with her husband and three children in Skaneateles. (One is in college and two are in Skaneateles Schools). Helen loves to cook for family and friends and recently launched a part-time, pre-order sushi business called Sushi with Seoul. Now that she will be busy during the school year, she will open the business during her summers off.



**Carl Foehl** is a teaching assistant in the Middle School and High School. This is a second career for Carl, who feels his previous experience as a business leader and electrical engineer gives him a unique perspective in assisting students. "I am very excited to help guide and teach our students as they prepare for an ever-changing world," he said. He has lived in Skaneateles more than 20 years, has coached in the basketball program for over ten years, and has three children who have gone through Skaneateles Schools. "I welcome the opportunity to work with our great Special Education Department as it positively impacts our students and families," he said.



**Victoria Daoust** is an intern in the High School Counseling Center. She completed her BS in Psychology with a minor in Sociology from SUNY Cortland and is currently pursuing her MS in School Counseling from Syracuse University. Victoria will be working closely with Barb Drozynski and the Counseling Center for the full school year. In her free time, Victoria enjoys hiking, skiing the local mountains, and cooking.



**Andrew Rozak** is a new physical education teacher at State Street School. He coaches Boys Modified Soccer and Girls Varsity Hockey. For the past six years, he taught in the Oswego City School District and served as the Boys Varsity Hockey coach there. He received his PE degree and his MS in Health Education from SUNY Cortland. His first degree from SUNY Oswego was in Business Administration. The satisfaction he got from working with kids as a head hockey instructor at a hockey training facility in Mississauga, Ontario, (where he is originally from) is what led him back to college for his PE degree. He lives in Owasco with his wife, Katie, who coaches diving and is the assistant lacrosse coach in Skaneateles. They have two children, ages 4 and 2.



**Susan Grady** returns to teach first grade at Waterman School after attempting to retire in June. The size of the first grade class increased enough that the district felt it best to add another section, and Sue gladly agreed to fill the spot. Grady has a long history in the district, with many years in first grade. Everyone is glad to have her back.



## New staff members, continued

### **Abbie Paine**

is the full time counselor at State Street School. She has a BA from Geneseo and an MS in Counseling from SUNY



Oswego. Previously she was a long term substitute in the West Genesee School District; a middle school counselor in Brighton (Rochester area) for five years; and an elementary counselor at Fayetteville-Manlius for 4.5 years. She has three children. "We love to ski, hike, and spend time at our cottage." Abbie said she is very excited to be part of the Skaneateles community.

### **Mary Allen**

is a Reading Specialist at Waterman School. She has a M.Ed in Developmental and Remedial



Reading. She taught fifth and sixth graders for 20 years in Dallas and was a reading specialist for grades 1-6 for three years in State College, PA. She then attended the French Culinary Institute in NYC to become a classically trained chef. She worked at the Ritz Carlton in Palm Beach. A graduate of Skaneateles Central Schools, she has come full circle to be "back home" - in Skaneateles and in the teaching profession. In her spare time, she likes to read, cook and test recipes for magazines. She also enjoys spending time with her daughter, an interior designer in NYC. "I am thrilled to be back in my hometown of Skaneateles!"

### **Anthony**

**Pignatti** is a second grade teacher at Waterman School. He has a BS in Childhood



Education and an MS in Education from SUNY Oswego. He subbed in the North Syracuse Central School District and the Baldwinsville Central School District becoming a full-time sixth grade mathematics teacher in the Syracuse City Schools. "I enjoy spending my spare time outdoors. I like to stay active playing basketball, soccer, and going on hiking trips. I also enjoy traveling and spending time with family and friends."

### **Michele Rogala** was hired to

do social work/counseling and instructional support at Skaneateles Middle School. She has a BS in Child and



Family Studies from Syracuse University and a Master's degree in Social Work (MSW) from UNC Chapel Hill. She is a Certified Mental Health First Aid instructor. Michele was a school social worker for Cayuga Onondaga BOCES working in K-12+ Alternative Ed and Special Ed programs for 10 years prior to coming to Skaneateles. She has two children in the Marcellus Central School District. She enjoys spending time outdoors - boating, downhill skiing, snowshoeing, and going to the family camp on the St. Lawrence River.

**Josh Hares** is a special education teacher at the Middle School and High School. He has a BA in Mathematics and Education



from Ithaca College and an MS in Special Education from Binghamton University. He taught one year at Cayuga Onondaga BOCES before moving to Virginia, where he taught in an Autism Spectrum Program for six years: two in middle school and four in high school. He focuses on helping students find what motivates them in life. When he is not teaching he enjoys spending time with his wife and rooting for the Chicago Cubs.

**Lucy Copeland** is a long-term sub in

special education at Skaneateles Middle School. She has been a teacher assistant at State Street



and Waterman Schools. She previously worked for Enable, assisting preschool children with disabilities. She has a Bachelor's degree from Columbia College and a Master's degree in Teaching from Le Moyne College. "I have been fortunate to fulfill all of my permanent certification requirements by teaching in a number of positions within the Skaneateles District. It is a privilege to grow as a part of this fabulous district." She enjoys spending time with her husband and three children.

## New staff

**Courtney Klunder** has joined the special education department and works with students in the Middle and High School. She began her career as a researcher in molecular biology. She was in grad school doing research when she taught an intro to biology class. "I found I absolutely loved teaching and working with students." She transitioned into secondary education and got Masters degrees in Education (biology) and Special Education at Le Moyne. "It has been a perfect fit." She comes from Bishop Grimes Jr./Sr. High School where she helped head many new initiatives for the special education department. She can be found enjoying her free time outdoors year round: hiking, running, and learning to ski.



**Christine Pepper** is teaching earth science at the High School and science in the Middle School. She has a BS in Forest Science from Texas A&M University and an Education Certificate from Montgomery College. Previously, Christy taught at College Park High School in Houston, Texas, and worked as a professional forester in both the public and private sectors. Christy lives in Spafford with her husband and two daughters. She enjoys gardening, traveling and spending time with her family.



## Classroom design enhances learning

To maximize learning potential in students, it is important to consider how the learning environment is structured. Research shows that furniture, lighting, and colors can all enhance students' ability to learn. These things are considered as the district undergoes necessary changes and renovations.

When it comes time to update or replace furniture in their classrooms, an increasing number of teachers are selecting alternative designs. One example of this can be found in the English classroom of Andrew Tidd.

In place of the individual desks that used to fill his classroom, he now has small trapezoid-shaped tables that can be put together to accommodate different group sizes. They are lightweight and easy to move.

"I decided I wanted to try the tables to better foster the collaborative environment I'm after," he said. "I started exploring Project-Based Learning last year knowing that the ability to problem solve and make decisions appears somewhere at the top of nearly all 'necessary skills' surveys I could find."



## History lessons important to a better future

*What does 9/11 mean to eighth graders who weren't alive on that day in 2001? Skaneateles Middle School Social Studies Teacher Jim Ryan asked his students to share words that came to their minds: Heartbreaking, horrific, tragic, awful, evil, terrifying. They talked about how much they've learned about that day from their teachers over the years. "In our instruction, as in our planning, it is critical that we pay proper attention to the past if we want our students to be better learners and better citizens who can solve the problems that they will inherit," said Superintendent Ken Slentz.*

## Local Postal Patron



*Middle School students rehearse.*

### The benefits of music

The known benefits of music on the brain just keep growing. Orchestra teacher Karen Veverka's presentation at Strings Information Night was full of useful information about research findings -- and about what to expect this year from our strings program. You can learn more by going to our website. Follow the quick link titled District Videos. See much more while you are there!

### Thanks to our partners

The District is fortunate to have many partners, including the PTCs, booster clubs, and the Skaneateles Education Foundation. Partnerships are critical to our success. A special thanks to Bill Stevens for his 22 years of service on the Endowment Foundation Board.



### Off to a great start

*Students and staff are off to a great start. Above right: Pat Brown, Assistant Elementary Principal, welcomes students on the first day. Floors were shiny and reflective, thanks to Buildings and Grounds crews.*



Above photo by Cari Danaher



### Learning to "fly"

*Fall means trips to Orenda Springs for every fifth grade class at State Street School. The ropes course empowers individuals while also inspiring students to work together collaboratively. While students balance, climb and "fly," the focus is on skill development and character education. Heather Buff, who shared these photos, said the day helps everyone get to know each other quickly. "It gives us a sense of community, and I think you can see how well we know each other when you see us interact together. It is truly a team building day and my team is ready to roll."*



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*"Learning is not some of the time; it's all of the time, for all of us"*