



Tiger Traditions

September/October 2016 - Volume 17 • Issue 1



Roof view of cupola facade restoration at Mexico High.

MACS Summer Construction

Construction was a major activity at at both Mexico Middle School and Mexico High School during this past summer. With projects from basements to rooftops, and all levels in between, renovation and transformation happened. Nearly all of these construction projects will be completed by opening day, September 7, 2016. The auditorium renovation underway at Mexico High School is expected to be completed in December of 2016. Additional photos of the construction in progress can be found on the district website at www.MexicoCSD.org.



Mexico High School auditorium under restoration. The finished project will include seating in the balcony which will, along with the main seating area, be handicap accessible.



Introducing...Mr. McGrath

As the 2016-17 school year begins, Mr. Joseph McGrath will be found serving as the Mexico High School principal. Joe grew up in Oswego and for the majority of his career worked in the Pulaski School District. From 1977 - 1998 he worked as a counselor in the high school. From 1998 to 2011 he served as the Pulaski High School principal. Joe makes his home in Pulaski and currently serves on the Pulaski School Board of Education.



MACS Student Board Member

Mexico High School Senior Emily Blunt has been named the MACS Board of Education Student Representative for the 2016-17 school year.

Emily is the president of Mexico High School Student Council.

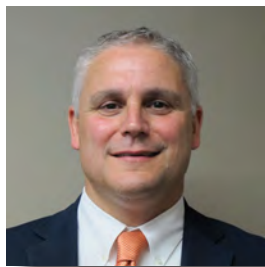
She is the daughter of Julia and Jim Blunt.



Please Drive Safely!

For district information including a calendar of events, MACS Board of Education meeting dates and times, contact information and more, visit the district web site at www.Mexicocsd.org

A Message from the Superintendent



Welcome to the 2016-2017 school year at Mexico Academy and Central School District!

As you can see throughout this edition of our Tiger Traditions, it has been a busy summer at MACS!

Over the summer months, we have updated and will continue to update our facilities to ensure that our children, staff and community have a safe, warm, welcoming, and professional learning environment. Our educators have participated in numerous professional development opportunities so that

we may deliver quality programs, services, and learning experiences that maximize our students' academic performance and personal development to ensure their future success. Most importantly, many students have benefited immensely from academic enrichment and academic support opportunities offered by MACS this summer.

As I have stated in earlier editions, we are always working towards continuous improvement for our District. In August, we launched our new website. In addition to this update being more aesthetically pleasing, our new website offers a host of new and improved opportunities to gather information as well as provide us with much desired two-way communication. It may take a while to get used to, but we hope you will also find it easier to navigate than our previous website. Please read the article for our website. Please don't hesitate to contact your child's school, our technology department or District office with any questions or assistance you may need while getting used to our new website.

In August and September, we will also be updating our District's Vision and Mission statements. (A mission clearly communicates the primary aim or goal of an organization. It defines the organization's single-most important reason for being and answers the question: Why do we exist? A vision is motivational. It describes what the organization aspires to become.) Along with these updates, we will also be creating our core beliefs. An organization's core beliefs act as a superset of criteria governing decision-making large and small on a daily basis. Core beliefs define and create culture and act as touchstones to guide behavior. This work is extremely important to our organization because everything we do every day will align to our updated mission, vision, and core beliefs.

Our work will also include using our District's data and aspirational goals to set strategic performance targets, immediate priorities and long-term strategies that align with our updated mission, vision, and core beliefs. District team members are required to regularly report information and progress to their respective buildings/departments. I will report out our progress as we achieve it.

To ensure that we are continually improving our District for our students, parents, staff, and community, we will also be participating in a study of our district's grade structure

and facilities. Mr. Alan Pole and Dr. Bill Silky of Castallo & Silky LLC (Syracuse, New York) are the education consultants that the district has hired to help facilitate the study process.

An advisory committee with broad-based representation from all geographic sections of our school district community has been selected to serve. The committee will be working closely with consultants the district has hired to conduct this important study. All meetings are open to the public.

The following is a schedule of all the meetings. These meetings are also listed in our District's Calendar

- October 24, 2016 at Hungerford Library
- December 12, 2016 at Mexico Middle School Library
- January 9, 2017 at Palermo Elementary Cafeteria
- February 27, 2017 at New Haven Elementary Cafeteria
- April 10, 2017 at Mexico Elementary Cafeteria
- June 12, 2017 at Hungerford Library

All meetings will run from 6:30-8:30 p.m. (for several meetings an optional tour of the host district school will also be conducted from 5:45-6:30). Meetings are listed on our District's calendar.

On a different note, I would like to provide you an update on the impact to our District and community that the passage of the clean energy credits extension to include nuclear power, which resulted in Exelon's Purchase of FitzPatrick. As you know, this outcome that we worked so hard to achieve is a tremendous win for us. It provides the support to save over 600 jobs at FitzPatrick and many more at Nine Mile and Ginna. In addition to the saved jobs being wonderful for all of the employees and their families, it also prevents a mass exodus of over 600 employees and their families, which would have resulted in reduced student population and potential reductions in property values. The continued operation of FitzPatrick also lays the foundation to maintain the financial benefits received by our local and regional economy as well as the economy surrounded Ginna.

As you know, we currently have a PILOT agreement with Entergy for FitzPatrick. The current PILOT is not transferable, which means that there are two options once the sale to Exelon is final. The first option is that the plant pays taxes on full assessed value. (This option may again result in legal proceedings disputing the assessed value.) The second option is a PILOT agreement between Exelon, MACS, the County of Oswego County, and the Town of Scriba. As always, our Board of Education Members and I will work collaboratively with our Oswego County and Scriba partners to do what is right for our District and our community.

I would like to leave you with one final thought. Every fall, MACS receives the most precious gifts anyone could imagine, the opportunity to facilitate learning with the children of our community. I want you to know that we deeply appreciate your trust in us! We promise to honor that trust by creating a safe, warm, caring, supportive, and challenging learning environment so that all of our children can realize that the hopes and dreams that you as parents and community members have for them. We relish the opportunity to work with you as partners in fulfilling this promise. I encourage all parents and community members to get involved with our schools so that together we may maximize our impact.

I look forward to another fantastic school year! Please know that I am always available to you. In addition to contacting me in person, you may also contact me through my email address: sbruno@mexicocsd.org, my office number: 963-5400 ext. 5403, or my cell number: 200-9542.

May this be the best year yet!

Sean C. Bruno,
MACS Superintendent of Schools

Contact me at:
16 Fravor Road,
Mexico, NY 13114
963-8400 Ext. 5401

www.mexicocsd.org

MACS in Mexico Firemen's Field Days Parade



Both the MACS Marching Band and the MACS Alumni Band proudly participated in the Mexico

Volunteer Firemen's Field Days Parade on July 15, 2016.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Jeremy Belfield, 16 Fravor Road, Suite A, Mexico, NY 13114, 315-963-8400 x5407 or 315-297-7780. Inquiries concerning the application of the Mexico Academy & Central Schools non-discrimination policies may also be referred to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), 32 Old Slip, 26th Floor, New York, NY 10005, telephone (646) 428-3800 (voice) or (800) 877-8339 (TTY).



Proud to be MACS

Dennis Brooks, MACS Board of Education Member Dennis Brooks Jr. was selected as the July 2016 MACS Honoree. Dennis served on the MACS BOE for the past three years - from 2013 to 2016. He makes his home in Mexico, with his wife Lisa, and their children; Corrinne, Sarah, and Trevor.



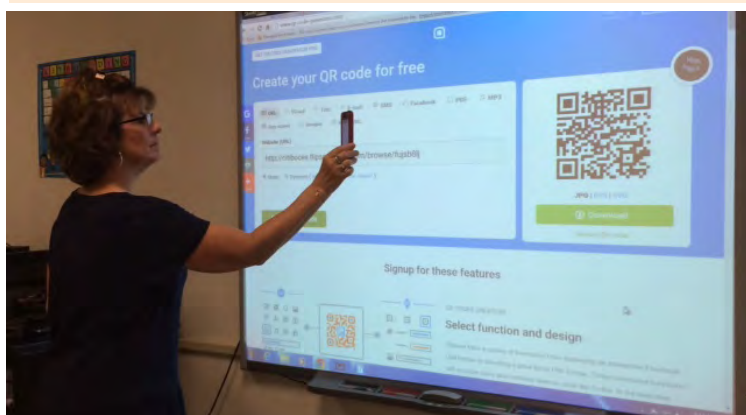
Donald Root, (former) Mexico High School Principal, was selected as the August 2016 Proud to be MACS Honoree. Don served as principal at the high school from January 2009 to June 2016. He and his wife, Mary Pat, are parents of two grown daughters, Alex and Morgan. Don and Mary Pat make their home in Clay, NY.



Fitzpatrick Announcement Good News for District

Above: Governor Andrew Cuomo, center left, posed for a photo with the members of the Mexico Academy and Central School Band following his announcement that Exelon had agreed to purchase the FitzPatrick Nuclear Power Plant from Entergy at a rally held at the power plant on August 9, 2016. The announcement is welcome news for the plant employees, Mexico School District, the community, and the state as a whole. MACS District Superintendent Sean Bruno stands right, along with MACS Board of Education Vice-President Darlene Upcraft. The band was directed by MACS Band Director Kevin Upcraft.

At right: New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo shakes hands with MACS District Superintendent Sean Bruno at the FitzPatrick Nuclear Power Plant Rally on August 9, 2016.

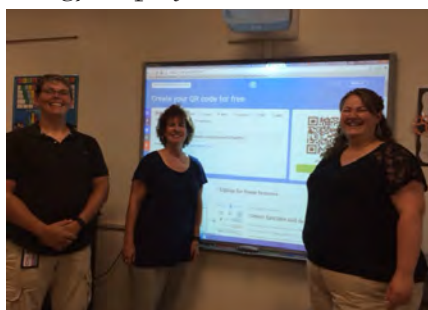


MACS Pre-K Teacher Suzanne Maniccia learns how to scan a bar code.

Elementary Electronic iCamp

An Elementary Electronic iCamp training session, for beginners in technology, was held on August 10, 2016, at Palermo Elementary School. The session was led by Lynn Millbyer, CiTi Computer Education Specialist, who explained the content of the training saying, "They're working on using technology for instruction and informative assessment, as well as students using technology for projects."

CiTi Computer Education Specialist Lynn Millbyer, left, MACS Pre-K Teacher Suzanne Maniccia, center, and MACS Substitute Teacher Andres Searles pause for a photo during the iCamp training session.



MACS Class of 1976 Celebrates 40th Reunion

The MACS Class of 1976 celebrated with a 40th year reunion on July 16, 2016. Several members of the class attended a tour of Mexico

High School, given by MACS Board of Education President James Emery, during the afternoon, and a multitude gathered at the Eis House, in Mexico, for an evening of food, fun, music and reconnecting.



Our New Website

IS LOADED WITH AWESOME NEW FEATURES!



The Mexico Academy & Central School District has launched a new responsive website that will improve the ease of navigation and help create stronger communication between parents, teachers, students and community members.

Aesthetically, the new website bridges the gap between modernized designs and traditional schemes, creating a transitional style specific to the district. The design of the website corresponded with the development of an updated district logo, which features the landmark cupola atop Mexico High School surrounded with a contemporary touch.



Event Rich Calendars: For the district, each school building and athletics department to help keep your schedule up-to-date with the latest events.



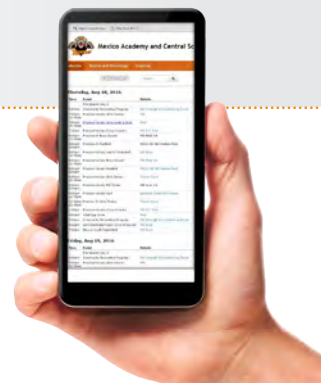
Let's Talk! is a communication software that allows visitors of the website to submit questions, comments, suggestions, concerns or compliments to a selected interest area. Each interest area is managed by a member of the district staff, who will provide an answer within an allotted timeframe.



FamilyID: We are going green and saving time and paper with this new feature that offers easy-to-use online registrations for many programs and activities.

NEW ATHLETIC CALENDARING SYSTEM

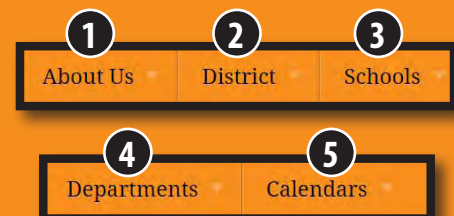
The new website features include a new athletic calendaring system called **rSchoolToday**, an easy-to-use online platform.



THE WEBSITE IS DIVIDED INTO

5 SECTIONS

Following months of planning and development, the website was divided into five sections: **About Us, District, Schools, Departments and Calendars.** The five sections were strategically selected to help improve the site's navigation and ease of use.

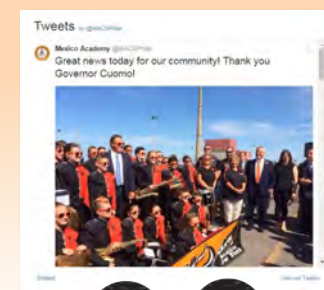


The homepage features icons at the top of the page that will provide access to:

- MACSNET:** Sign in to the Mexico Sharepoint site for district web links from school or from home.
- GRADES:** Easy access to SchoolTool. Check on assignments, grades and classroom information.
- LUNCH:** Access to the lunch menus right at your fingertips.
- DIRECTORY:** Find staff and faculty faster and easier - also those teachers pages are linked right from the directory.
- QUESTIONS?** Have a question? Comment? Click here for easy access to our new Let's Talk! feature.

STAY ALERT: Get important alerts on the website, phone message and via text with our new notification and messaging system called **Mass Notification.**

STAY CONNECTED:



Board Docs is a paperless board of education management software that will house all of our Board of Education forms, policies, meeting agendas and minutes.



DOWNLOAD OUR NEW APP!

Search for Mexico CSD!

Download the official **Mexico Academy and Central School District app** today for access to your school's news, calendars, push notifications, Rosters, Directories, photos, SchoolTool, access to the new website and much more!



More awesome features will be added soon: check bus routes, lunch balances, student assignments, grades and scores and much more.



A district News Section, easy to find links specific to students, parents and community members, an upcoming events section and a resources section that will feature links to important sections of the site, such as Code of Conduct can all be found on the home page.



(Above) MACS Principal Rick Chapman, dressed in official space gear, teaches the Elementary and Middle School Summer Skills Academy students at Mexico Middle School about the rocket, center, that is about to be launched.

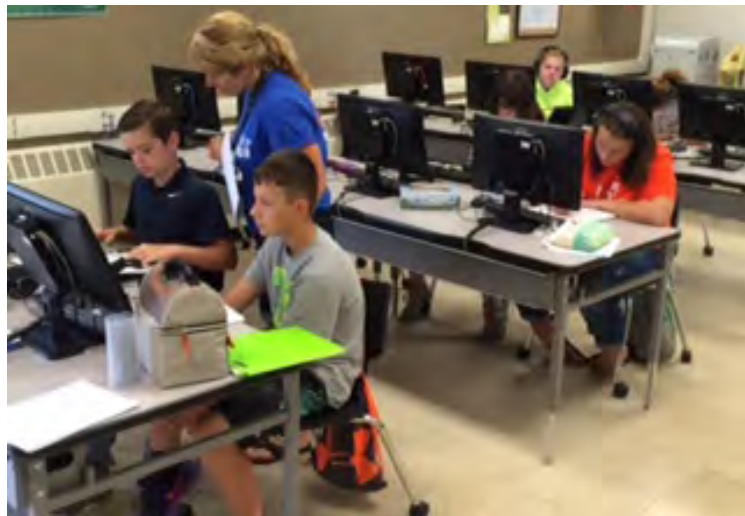
MACS Elementary and Middle School Summer Skills Academy

A total of 78 students attended MACS Elementary and Middle School Summer Skills Academy. The three-week academy was offered to first through eighth grade students and was held at Mexico Middle School during the morning, from mid-July through the first week in August. In addition to in-class lessons, students experienced learning out-of-doors on the school campus and enjoyed field trips as well. The program was led by Mexico Middle School Assistant Principal Patrick Vrooman and New Haven Elementary School Principal Richard Chapman, with a number of teachers and assistants in the classrooms. Overall, the academy reported a 95 percent attendance rate. Explaining the purpose of the academy, Patrick Vrooman says, "This program is designed to improve math and ELA skills while also promoting interest in the fields of science."



Field trips were part of the Summer Skills Academy sessions, and brought a number of the students to SUNY Oswego to see the planetarium, and to Mexico Point. Above, Connor Love performs an experiment in chemistry lab during the SUNY Oswego field trip.

MACS Summer Math Camp



Eighth grade students taking Algebra I in September, as well as students beginning Geometry in ninth grade this year, had the opportunity to participate in Math Camp during the summer. MACS Math Teacher Tina Sabourin led the students through a Schoology program and explains how it worked saying, "The Schoology program was set up to eliminate scheduling conflicts that we encountered last summer trying to teach it as an actual class in school. The 7th graders had a little over 12 weeks to complete it, which should have been one folder each week. Each folder consisted of a video (lasting six minutes to 20 minutes), and five quick multiple choice questions. The idea was that they could complete it on their own; however, I was available [at the middle school], for three hours every other Wednesday for them to get help or just have a quiet place to work....I was available to them via email anytime as well..."

Anywhere from five - ten students attended the in-school sessions every other week. The students going into algebra covered such areas as: monomials, scientific notation, slope, graphing, writing equations, systems of equations, basic geometry, transformations, radicals and Pythagorean theorem. Students going into 9th grade and taking geometry had seven folders to complete covering: basic geometry, transformations, radicals, Pythagorean theorem, percents, proportions, and ratio word problems.

Speaking about Math Camp over all, Tina Sabourin says, "It's a great opportunity for me to have communications with my upcoming students prior to them being in my class. The students I had last summer felt very comfortable with me from the start of school because they already knew me. This program will allow me to do a quick review of the basics they would have learned in 8th grade math but focus on the more complex rigorous questions that they are frequently asked on the Algebra I regents exam."



Safety Day at MACS Learn-to-Swim Program

Safety Day was held during the MACS Learn-to-Swim Program on August 11, 2016. New York State Trooper Daniel Sandford, standing left, and McFee Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Miranda Shafer, squatting right, joined the Learn-to-Swim staff in teaching the swimmers general safety rules at home, beyond their homes, and in and around water. Upwards of 100 children that day, learned such things as how to wear life jackets, not to touch a gun, and how and when to call 911.

MACS Learn-to-Swim Program is sponsored by the Mexico School District and is held in the Mexico High School pool. Five sessions of swimming lessons are conducted during the summer months and each session is 10 days long. All five sessions include a Safety Day which adds up to 500 children learning safety measures. MACS Learn-to-Swim Coordinator for the 2016 season was Lindsay Rodas, standing right.

MACS ESY Summer 2016

MACS Extended School Year (ESY) Summer Program had 30 students in attendance for six weeks during the summer. The program highlighted on Common



MACS ESY students had fun at the Mexico Firemen's Field Days on August 15, 2016.

Core learning standards and also included five field trips. Teachers and students enjoyed experiences at the Mexico Firemen's Field Days, the bowling alley, and the zoo. Jessica Piscitelli served as the MACS ESY Program Principal and worked alongside MACS Director of Pupil Services Pamela Buddendeck coordinating the program.

MACS Girls Open Basketball



Girls in the Mexico School District had the opportunity to practice and play basketball for six weeks, on Wednesday nights, during the summer. Under the leadership of MACS Coaches Dominick Anthony and Kristine Earley, girls at the modified, junior varsity, and varsity levels (grades 5 - 12), attended the open basketball nights at Mexico Middle School. An average of 12 girls participated each session.



SkillsUSA New York State Champion

Congratulations to Mary Buske who received a gold first-place medal in Early Childhood Education at the New York State SkillsUSA Championship. Buske had to demonstrate her knowledge of developmentally-appropriate practice by preparing a written lesson plan and taking an exam on her understanding of child development and learning.



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Emily Blunt - Student Representative

Superintendent of Schools

Sean Bruno
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MACS GradPoint Program



Over 60 Mexico High School students participated in the six-week summer session of the MACS GradPoint Program. The program ran for two, three-week segments during the summer, each of which had a three-hour morning time block and a three-hour afternoon block.

What is the purpose of the GradPoint Program? "To earn credit for classes not previously passed, but necessary for graduation," explains MACS GradPoint Teacher Tina Spriggs (pictured back right).

GradPoint operates on a computer program through Pearson, using set curriculum to recover credit. The program is offered during the school year as well, with the goal of assisting students in getting back in their cohort year and on schedule for graduation.

The graduation rate at Mexico High School has gone up considerably since the program's inception in 2007. "We've put hundreds of students back on track for graduation," says Tina Spriggs, who taught the first three-week segment of the summer program with the assistance of MACS Teacher David Maidens. MACS Teacher James McKenna led the second three-week segment, assisted by MACS Teacher Shannon Bigelow.

MACS Blended Learning Training

Three sessions, and three levels, of Blended Learning Training were conducted in the MACS District during the month of July, 2016. More than 60 teachers in the district are Blended Learning teachers at this point, and approximately 48 of these teachers attended training this summer. The training sessions were led by three CiTi Computer Educational Specialists: Nancy Kather, Lynn Millbyer, and Brad Beck.



MACS Blended Learning Teachers: Beth Holden, left, and Lynn Sheldon.

Explaining the Blended Learning concept Nancy Kather says, "Basically Blended Learning is instructional strategy which blends traditional processes with online resources."



MACS Blended Learning Teacher Jeanne Baldwin, left, with CiTi Computer Educational Specialist Nancy Kather.

Calendar of Events



Sept. 5	Labor Day - School Closed
Sept. 6	Superintendent's Conference Day
Sept. 7	First Day of School, Grades 1-12
Sept. 8	First Day of School, Kindergarten
Sept. 8	MACS Board of Education Mtg., 6pm
Sept. 13	First Day of School, Pre-School
Sept. 15	New Haven Elem. Open House, 5pm
Sept. 21	High School Open House, 6pm
Sept. 27	4th Grade Beginning Band, 6:30pm
Sept. 28	Palermo Elem. Open House, 6pm
Sept. 29	Mexico Elem. Open House
Oct. 3	HS/MS After School Activities Program Starts
Oct. 5	Middle School Open House, 6pm
Oct. 7	Superintendents Conference Day - Early Dismissal
Oct. 10	Columbus Day, No School
Oct. 11	High School Fall Band/ Chorus Concert, 7pm
Oct. 13	MACS Board of Education Meeting, 6pm
Oct. 20	New Haven Fall Festival, 5pm
Oct. 26	Middle School 7/8 Band/ Chorus Concert, 7pm
Oct. 29	JROTC Home Drill Meet
Oct. 31	Halloween Parades at Elementary Schools