

## ACT for Education Webinar: School Health Practices in the Era of COVID-19 with Dr. Mendoza

Superintendent Pero participated in an October 15 ACT for Education webcast on “School Health Practices in the Era of COVID-19” with Monroe County Public Health Commissioner Dr. Mendoza, Monroe 2–Orleans BOCES District Superintendent Jo Anne Antonacci and Hilton Central School District Superintendent Dr. Casey Kosiorek. To view the webcast, visit <https://actforeducation.org/live>.



The webinar was one of a series of bi-weekly 45-minute webcasts offered every other Thursday by ACT for Education to provide families with current, accurate information pertaining to area schools and education.



## Grandson of Mahatma Gandhi Visits Granddaughter’s Class Via Zoom

Arun Gandhi, the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi and the grandfather of Jefferson Road Elementary School student Ellie Prasad, visited 5th grade JRE students via Zoom to read his book, “Be the Change: A Grandfather Gandhi Story.” He spoke about the important lessons his grandfather taught him as a child, answered questions from students and reminded them to “be the change they wish to see in the world.” View the video on Pittsford Central School District’s YouTube page at: <https://youtu.be/y8gC19mjXDE>



## Mendon High School Named a 2020 National Blue Ribbon School

Pittsford Mendon High School was recognized as a 2020 National Blue Ribbon School in a September 24 announcement from U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos. As an Exemplary High Performing 2020 National Blue Ribbon School, MHS was recognized within the category of Whole School Performance of the top 15% of the state in reading/ELA and math state assessments, separately or combined. Mendon High School is one of just 367 in the nation and one of 18 schools in New York State to receive the 2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools award.



## Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Appointed

The Board of Education unanimously appointed Shawn Clark as Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources. Clark is currently serving as Principal of Jefferson Road Elementary School and will begin his new role as Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources when a new principal at Jefferson Road Elementary School has been named. “With years of experience in and out of the classroom and a demonstrated ability to lead collaborative decision-making, Shawn will be a great addition to our Central Office Team,” said Superintendent Michael Pero.

Clark joined the Pittsford Central School District in 2013 as the principal of Jefferson Road Elementary School where he implemented data teams to support student growth, collaborated with the school’s PTSA to launch biennial International and STEAM days, and fostered an environment of shared leadership and accountability. He previously served as a principal in the Batavia City School District for nine years where he worked with staff

to design a master schedule that focused academic resources and increased teacher collaboration across and between grade levels. Prior to these leadership roles, Clark was a special education teacher for nine years in the Rochester City School District and Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES.

He is replacing the retiring Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Michael Leone.

Clark received his Bachelor’s degree in Exceptional Education from SUNY Buffalo and his Master’s degree in Special Education from SUNY Geneseo. Clark completed his Educational Administration work at St. John Fisher College where he received the award for Distinguished Leadership. He and his wife live in Pittsford with their son who attends Mendon High School.



## COVID-19 Protocols Working in Our Schools

**Pittsford Schools COVID-19 UPDATE** The COVID-19 protocols PCSD has in place are working so well that, to date, no school-based transmission has occurred.\* So far, cases and quarantines have been primarily related to situations like:

- Traveling
- Attending gatherings outside of school with an infected person (no masks and within 6 feet)
- Non-school sanctioned sports
- Family member to family member transmission

The established protocols and daily work with the Monroe County Department of Public Health have been effective, so health officials urge students and families to continue following these practices, even outside of school:

- Wear a mask or face covering
- Keep a social distance of 6 feet or more from those outside your family
- Wash your hands and use hand sanitizer

“Positive cases and quarantines will continue to occur as long as COVID-19 exists, however, parents can feel confident that PCSD is managing it well,” said Superintendent Pero, adding that “Our community must stay vigilant in order to keep case counts low and prevent transmission within our schools and community.”

### COVID-19 Reporting System

Staff members and parents/guardians of students who receive a positive COVID-19 test result outside of normal school hours should use the reporting button on the homepage of the District website at [www.pittsfordschools.org](http://www.pittsfordschools.org) to complete Pittsford Schools’ COVID-19 reporting form. Submitting this form will alert an administrator who will contact you with further guidance.



### CDC Updates

In October, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its definition of COVID-19 close contact to be 15 minutes or more of cumulative exposure to infectious individuals, within 6 feet, in a 24-hour period regardless of masking and whether the contact was inside or outdoors. The previous guideline indicated 15 minutes or more of continuous close contact.

### NYS Updates

In September, NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH) released a “Pre-K to Gr 12 COVID-19 Toolkit” with updated guidance and an added provision for healthcare providers (HCP) to give a student/ staff member an alternative diagnosis if they have chronic conditions with unchanged symptoms, or a confirmed acute illness (examples: laboratory-confirmed influenza, strep-throat) AND COVID-19 is not suspected. A signed HCP note documenting and explaining the alternative diagnosis is required. The new guidelines have been added to the “COVID-19 Flowsheets for Student or Staff with COVID-19 Symptoms” at [www.pittsfordschools.org/COVID-19INFORMATION](http://www.pittsfordschools.org/COVID-19INFORMATION). The entire toolkit is also available on the PCSD COVID-19 website and at <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov>. NYS Guidelines are required protocols for staff and students.

On October 31, Governor Cuomo announced these new travel guidelines:

- Travelers must get tested within three days prior to landing in New York, quarantine for at least three days upon arrival, and get a test on day four of arrival
- If travelers receive a negative test on day four of quarantine they may exit quarantine when they receive the negative result
- States that are contiguous with New York continue to be exempted from quarantine protocol — essential workers also continue to be exempted
- Travelers who were only out of state for less than 24 hours do not need to quarantine but must get a test on day four of arrival back in NY
- All travelers covered by the advisory must continue to fill out the Traveler Health Form upon arrival into New York State

\*As of 11/6/20

## PCSD Continues Work with National Equity Expert Natalie McGee



In support of its ongoing commitment to inclusivity and equity, Pittsford Central School District renewed its contract with Natalie McGee, a national equity expert who worked with PCSD last school year from July – March. Ms. McGee serves as a lead cultural proficiency consultant helping school districts and organizations respond in healthy ways to diversity by developing inclusive policies and practices. In her past work with Pittsford Schools, Ms. McGee has provided valuable professional development to our school community surrounding cultural proficiency while assessing our current practices and culture in order to help shape this year’s equity work.

During the 2020-21 school year, Ms. McGee will spend three sessions with our Board of Education and central office administrators with a focus on leading District leaders in collaborative planning conversations about current and next equity steps for sustainable growth. The first of these collaborative conversations was held in October and explored racial/ethnic gaps, social and emotional learning gaps, and the means to effectively foster the cultural environment shaped by diversity.

Ms. McGee will also spend four sessions with elementary and secondary

administrators and staff. Building off knowledge from last year’s training sessions, she will assist with aligning building level Equity Action Planning with the District’s equity and inclusivity initiative in a way that is actionable and sustainable.

Having conducted “equity learning walks” to obtain evidence of equitable practices in our secondary schools last year, equity walks are planned for all five of our elementary schools this year. The purpose of the equity walks is to look at the school environment, examine data (achievement, suspensions, referrals), and visit classrooms to determine if the environment is one that is conducive to the success of all students. Discipline policies, communication to parents (language translation), and school procedures are also reviewed for consistency, inclusivity, and equity. This also involves parent, student and staff focus groups. The process will conclude with a comprehensive report of her findings and recommendations for continuous improvement to building principals.

The overarching goal of this collaborative work around equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice is to close achievement gaps for minority students, increase student engagement in the classroom, improve attendance and student discipline processes, and enhance student achievement for all.



## Protect Yourself During Cold and Flu Season!

As winter begins and cold and flu season ramps up, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reminds us that it is imperative to follow basic precautions to protect yourself from COVID-19, the flu, and common colds and viruses.

- Wear your mask
- Stay at least six feet from others
- Wash/sanitize your hands
- Stay home when you are sick

For COVID-19 updates and resources, visit the District website at [www.pittsfordschools.org/COVID-19INFORMATION](http://www.pittsfordschools.org/COVID-19INFORMATION) or the CDC website at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus).

## Notice of Fire Inspection

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the annual inspection for 2020-21 of the buildings of the Pittsford Central School District for fire hazards which might endanger the lives of students, teachers and employees therein, has been completed and the report thereof is available at the Office of Operations, Maintenance & Security, 100 Mendon Center Road, for inspection by all interested persons.

Jeffrey R. Beardsley  
Director of Operations,  
Maintenance & Security

## Board of Education Budget Development Meeting Schedule

The development of a school district's budget is a thoughtful, year-long process that includes careful long-term planning. It is a multi-faceted process including budget preparation, presentation, review by the Board of Education and community members, formal budget adoption, further sharing with the community, and Board election. The 2021-22 budget will be unique as it will reflect expenses related to COVID-19 and other costs associated with funding materials, supplies, technology and staffing for hybrid and remote learning during the pandemic as well as potential reductions in Federal and NYS aid.

During this process there are a variety of meetings held by the Board of Education including Budget Work Sessions which are used by the Board of Education to gather information and ask questions about particular sections of the budget. These sessions are held outside of regular Board of Education meetings. Most decisions will be discussed during these sessions, however, formal action is only taken during Board of Education meetings.

The Pittsford Central School District community is invited and encouraged to attend and observe these sessions as they are open to the public. Community members will have the opportunity to comment at the subsequent regular Board of Education meetings, during the time allotted for public comment.

\*Due to COVID-19, public attendance/participation at Board meetings may be virtual. On the day of a Board meeting, links will be posted to the District website at [www.pittsfordschools.org](http://www.pittsfordschools.org) for the public to use for viewing/listening, participation in the public comment section of the Board meeting, and closed captioning.

Board of Education Meeting Schedule for 2021-22 Budget Development			
DATE	TIME	AGENDA	LOCATION
Monday, February 8, 2021	6 - 7 p.m.	<b>Budget Work Session.</b> Work Sessions are used by the Board of Education to gather information and ask questions about particular sections of the budget. These sessions are held outside of regular Board of Education meetings and are used to develop the budget. Most decisions will be discussed during these sessions, however, formal action is only taken during Board of Education meetings.	*Barker Road Middle School McCluski Room
Tuesday, February 23, 2021	6 - 7 p.m.	<b>Budget Work Session.</b>	*Barker Road Middle School McCluski Room
Tuesday, March 9, 2021	6 - 7 p.m.	<b>Budget Work Session.</b>	*Barker Road Middle School McCluski Room
Monday, April 19, 2021	7 p.m.	<b>Budget Adoption and Regular Board of Education Meeting.</b> Budget Adoption is placed on the agenda of the regular Board of Education meeting. During this meeting, the Board of Education formally votes to adopt the budget created during the Budget Work Sessions.	*Barker Road Middle School McCluski Room
Thursday, May 6, 2021 (New Date)	7:30 - 9 p.m.	<b>PTSA Meet the Board of Education Candidates Night</b>	*Barker Road Middle School McCluski Room
Monday, May 10, 2021	7 p.m.	<b>Budget Hearing and Regular Board of Education Meeting.</b> The Public Budget Hearing is the formal presentation of the Board of Education's adopted budget which will later be voted on by residents at the annual Budget Vote and Board of Education Election.	*Barker Road Middle School McCluski Room
Tuesday, May 18, 2021	7 a.m. - 9 p.m.	<b>Budget Vote and Board Election.</b> Voter identification is required.	Barker Road Middle School Gymnasium

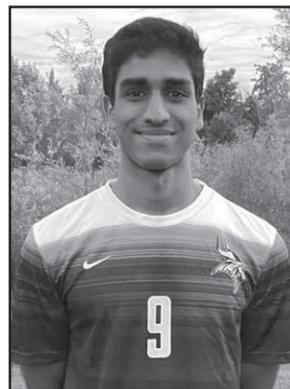
## MHS Senior Soccer Player Honored with #9 Jersey in 911 Tribute to Alumnus Todd Pelino

Jeremiah Anandarajah, a senior on the Mendon Boys Varsity Soccer team, received the honorary number nine jersey this season in memory of Todd Pelino, a 1985 Mendon High School graduate who lost his life on September 11, 2001 while working in one of the Twin Towers in New York City. Todd was a respected and well-liked classmate and member of the soccer team at Mendon High School, and every year since 2002, the team has nominated an exemplary teammate to wear his jersey number.

Jeremiah is an honor student, has been a part of the Mendon Boys Varsity Soccer team since tenth grade, was named Rookie of the Year his sophomore year, was selected for the All Monroe County 2nd Team his junior year, and is a team captain this year.

To view a video of Jeremiah talking about what it means to him to have the honor of wearing this jersey, visit:

<https://www.facebook.com/PittsfordCentralSchoolDistrict/videos/>.



## PCSD Makes the Grade on Rochester Business Journal's Report Card

Rochester Business Journal released its 2020 Schools Report Card, and Pittsford Central School District received the highest recognition in the categories of: Regents Diplomas; Regents English Common Core Exam; NYS 8th Grade English, Math and Science Exams; and NYS 4th Grade English and Science Exams.

To view the Rochester Business Journal 2020 Schools Report Card, visit: [www.pittsfordschools.org/RBJReportCard](http://www.pittsfordschools.org/RBJReportCard).



## Call for Nominations - Pittsford PTSA Life Membership Award

*Now is the time to recognize those special individuals (teachers, staff, coaches, parents, community members) who go above and beyond in supporting our students.*

The Pittsford PTSA invites you to help honor an individual who makes our school community a better place by nominating them for the 2021 Pittsford PTSA Life Membership Award. The NYS PTA Honorary Life Membership Award acknowledges members of the community who have gone above and beyond normal job or volunteer expectations in serving Pittsford youth.

Recipients are chosen by a committee of PTSA leaders from nominees submitted by the wider Pittsford community. Nominees must have demonstrated dedication to the youth of Pittsford in three categories:

- **Volunteer efforts** and/or significant contributions above and beyond normal job expectations over an extended period of time.
- **Outstanding personal qualities** that have enabled the nominee to serve as a role model for youth.
- **Ongoing availability and willingness** to serve the needs of youth, directly or in an administrative capacity.

To make a nomination and for more information, visit the Pittsford PTSA website at <https://www.pittsfordptsa.net/lifemembershipaward>. Nominations are due by **February 12, 2021**.

A ceremony to honor recipients is scheduled for April 27, 2021 from 7-9 p.m. at the Mendon High School Auditorium.

**PTSA**<sup>®</sup>  
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## English 12 Curriculum Redesigned

Most of the 12th grade English courses at Pittsford Mendon and Pittsford Sutherland High Schools have undergone significant revisions to provide a more in-depth learning experience, ensure all seniors have an equitable opportunity to meet the essential ELA Learning Standards, regardless of course selection, and offer literary works with greater diversity.

While all but two English 12 courses were previously one-semester offerings, seniors now have the opportunity to choose from ten full-year courses to fulfill their graduation requirement. Each course has a distinct concentration appealing to different student interests. The full-year courses provide for more sustained study of a particular focus area, additional opportunities to hone essential literacy skills prior to graduation, and more time for consistent, constructive feedback from their English teacher.

Each course is structured around the same essential, culminating New York State Next Generation ELA Learning Standards, and Pittsford's Next Generation Skills have been embedded into the curricular expectations for every course. Taken together, these standards and skills are designed to prepare students for life outside of the classroom and include critical-thinking, communication, and collaboration skills, the ability to comprehend and enjoy complex works of literature, and the use of cogent reasoning and evidence collection skills.

All seniors, regardless of which course they are enrolled in, complete a Senior Inquiry Project as a course requirement. This is an opportunity for seniors to delve deeply, and for a sustained period of time, into a question or problem of the student's choice, resulting in a paper and a

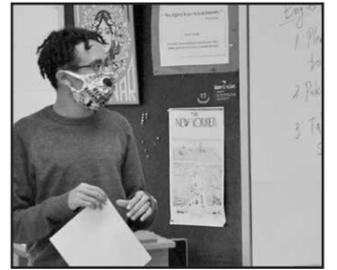
media-supported presentation. The Inquiry reflects the culmination of the English curriculum at PCSD and strives to engage students' imaginations, creativity, and passions.

In addition to the inclusion of the Senior Inquiry project, all courses, no matter the concentration, incorporate text and other experiences representing diverse voices and perspectives. While maintaining some texts that have served as anchors for 12th grade English course work, teachers have greatly expanded their resources to include authors, protagonists, and themes that represent a much broader, more diverse, and more accurate representation of the world around us.

Course concentrations include:

- AP English Literature and Composition
- British Literature
- Composition and Contemporary Texts
- Creative Writing
- Critical Media Literacy
- Film Analysis and Theory
- Human Expression and the Human Experience
- The Art of Public Speaking, Composition, and Rhetoric
- Theater Arts
- Visibility: Investigating Race, Class, Ability, and Gender in Language and Literature

For more information on these courses, please refer to the Program of Studies Guide on the Office of Curriculum and Instruction's webpage of the District website at [www.pittsfordschools.org](http://www.pittsfordschools.org).



## Pittsford PTSA Hosts Fundraising Week to Support School Programs and Events

Pittsford PTSA found a creative, safe way to carry on the tradition of the annual Super Sale during the COVID-19 pandemic by reimagining the sale into a Fundraising Week that took place October 17-24, 2020. The week kicked off with a Super Sale Trail of garage/yard sales hosted by families throughout the Pittsford community that allowed for outdoor sales and social distancing. During the week, families could eat or order take out from a variety of Pittsford area restaurants that donated a portion of their proceeds to the PTSA. Thank you to Chipotle, FAVO Pizza, and Philly Pretzel Factory and to residents who enjoyed their cuisine to support a good cause. The week concluded with a "Light the Loop" pumpkin parade where families had the opportunity to carve and drop a pumpkin off for display along the bus loops of Pittsford Schools' five elementary schools during the evening of October 24.

Proceeds from the Pittsford PTSA Fundraising Week fund programs and events such as enrichment grants, the Student Opportunity Fund, field trips, visiting authors, library support, senior awards and events, staff appreciation events, and much more.



## PCSD Board Members Honored During School Board Recognition Week

Pittsford Central School District joined public school districts across New York State to honor its Board of Education members during School Board Recognition Week, October 19-23, 2020 – a week proclaimed by NYS Governor Andrew Cuomo.



School Board Recognition Week is an opportunity to raise community awareness and understanding about the crucial voluntary role school board members have within a school district. PCSD Board of Education members were celebrated during the October 13 Board meeting in honor of School Board Recognition Week.

Pittsford Central School District recognizes and thanks its Board of Education members for their ongoing commitment and service to our students, schools and community:

- Amy J. Thomas, President
- Ted Aroesty, Vice President
- Valerie Baum
- Irene Narotsky
- René Sanchez-Kazacos
- Robin Scott
- Peter Sullivan

## Teacher Collaboration Key to Success of Temporary Learning Models

While teachers implement three different models of education during COVID-19 (socially-distanced in person school for grades K-5, hybrid model for grades 6-12, and a fully remote option for all grades), Wednesday afternoon Professional Learning Communities (PLC) provide the kind of collaboration that helps to make these new ways of teaching and learning successful.

Professional Learning Communities are collaborative teams organized around shared learning responsibilities with identified essential learning targets, including proficiency levels for each target and prerequisite skills for all units of instruction. Teams have also agreed upon how to best sequence and pace course content in order to help students achieve essential learning while individual teachers maintain autonomy in how the instruction is delivered in their classrooms.

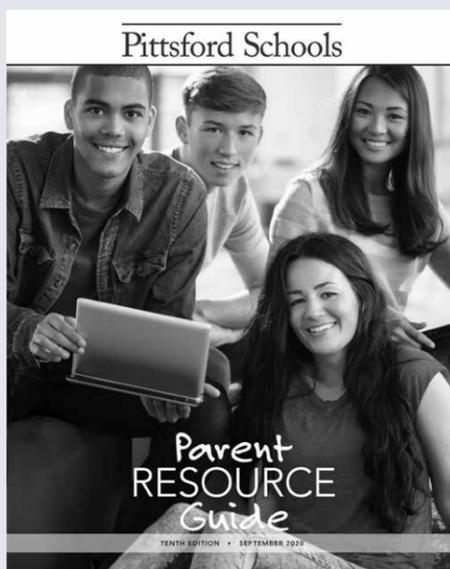
During PLC meetings on Wednesday afternoons, teachers of the same course can work together under established norms to troubleshoot issues, discuss topics impacting learning, and evaluate how students are doing in terms of meeting the essential learning targets for a course. During the first part of the 2020-21 school year, collaborative teams identified and worked through issues related to the new temporary learning models, such as technology, planning, scheduling, and instructional needs as they relate to the in-person, hybrid and remote models of learning.

## PCSD Parent Resource Guide Updated

Pittsford Schools has published a newly revised Parent Resource Guide with information about prevention and intervention strategies, facts about alcohol and substance use, terminology, suggested guidelines for teen parties, and resources for finding help and additional information.

The Parent Resource Guide was created for parents and offers the knowledge, skills and tools to help your children choose a substance free lifestyle. To view the 2020 Parent Resource Guide, visit [www.pittsfordschools.org/parentresource](http://www.pittsfordschools.org/parentresource).

If you have any questions or concerns related to alcohol and substance use and prevention, please reach out to PCSD Prevention Coordinator Ann Kane at [ann\\_kane@pittsford.monroe.edu](mailto:ann_kane@pittsford.monroe.edu) or 585-267-3677.



## Bus Drivers Needed!

If you love to drive or know someone who is looking for a rewarding job with great benefits, please contact the PCSD Transportation Office at (585) 267-3080 or email Donna\_Hansen@pittsford.monroe.edu.

## 2020-21 District Calendar and Event Cancellations

Most of Pittsford Schools' special events and activities have been canceled, until further notice, due to COVID-19 and restrictions on group events. This includes things like concerts, plays, musicals, and Homecoming. To keep up to date on any changes to our calendar and events that may occur during the school year, please refer to the District's online calendar by visiting [www.pittsfordschools.org](http://www.pittsfordschools.org) and selecting the calendar icon at the top of the homepage.

## Mendon and Sutherland High School Students "Chalk the Walk" to Spread Messages of Positivity

Students in Mendon and Sutherland High Schools' Studio Art classes spread messages of positivity and joy through colorful sidewalk chalk designs they created near the high school entrances this fall.

Approximately 80 Mendon High School students and 130 Sutherland High School students participated in the "Chalk the Walk" project to show how design and visual communication can help to build community. For the assignment, students selected powerful or positive words and incorporated them into a circular chalk design to create joyful moments for fellow students and staff.

View the Facebook album of these inspirational chalk drawings at [www.facebook.com/PittsfordCentralSchoolDistrict](https://www.facebook.com/PittsfordCentralSchoolDistrict).



The Pittsford Central School District does not discriminate in access, admission, employment, or treatment of participants in any of its programs and activities on the basis of race, religion, age, sex, color, handicapping condition, or ethnic or national origin. This is in compliance with Title IX, OCR Guidelines, and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations. Inquiries regarding compliance issues may be addressed to: Michael Leone, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, Administration Building, Pittsford Central Schools, 75 Barker Road, Pittsford, New York 14534.

### Pittsford Central Schools

75 Barker Road, East Wing  
Pittsford, NY 14534

(585) 267-1000

[www.pittsfordschools.org](http://www.pittsfordschools.org)

### Superintendent

Michael D. Pero

### Board of Education

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Ted Aroesty, Vice President

Valerie Baum

Irene Narotsky

René Sanchez-Kazacos

Robin Scott

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### Director of Communication

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Laurie Everhart

### Photographer

Susan Kost

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State and National Award  
Winning Publication



# Pittsford

School District News

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