

A Message from the Spackenkill Superintendent



One District, Multiple Paths to Excellence

December 4, 2020

Dear Spackenkill Community,

I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving break.

Last week, we communicated that our region is seeing a rapid rise in confirmed cases of COVID-19. This was a hot topic at a county superintendents' meeting with the Dutchess County Department of Behavioral and Community Health (DBCH) this past Wednesday. DBCH confirmed that the data shows it's not the schools that are hotspots for transmission. Small gatherings and community spread are the main issue. DBCH supports us in continuing in-person instruction. The Governor is focused on keeping students in the classroom as a long-term goal, and we will do everything in our power to make that happen safely.

Here is an excerpt from Governor Cuomo's strategy outlined in his Winter Plan:

One of the most critical aspects of managing the COVID-19 pandemic for governments and parents alike has been answering the question of how and when schools should remain open. On that point, experts from around the globe have determined that as long as a school's infection rate is under control and remains under the infection rate of the community at large, schools should remain open, particularly for students in K-8.

To read more from the Governor's plan, go to

<https://forward.ny.gov/covid-19-winter-plan>

We also wanted to let you know that instead of sending out an email and filling up your in-box every time an individual tests positive but instruction remains in person, we are asking you to check the [New York Forward COVID-19 School Report Card](#) for updates on individuals testing positive. We will also update the community in this newsletter every Friday. Despite the frequency of these emails, only once has a positive test resulted in a school having to go fully remote, and in most cases, the individuals were off-premises. New York State requires us to report positive cases even when the individual is not actually on site. Please note that our main reason for going fully remote relates to staffing. If staff must quarantine, then we might not have enough personnel to support in-person attendance. Going forward, you will only receive COVID notifications by SchoolMessenger communication if a building must operate on a fully remote schedule.

It is our hope that we can continue on an uninterrupted schedule until the holiday break, which begins on **December 23** (this is a change from the previous calendar, as we have added one day in the likelihood that we won't have to use as many snow days as in the past). Following the holiday break and as conditions evolve, we will reassess our plans for in-person and remote learning.

With the holiday season now upon us, please consider supporting Adopt-a-Family, LEO Club's annual fundraiser for district families in need—adapted for the pandemic. You can read more about it below.

Adopt-a-Family for the Holidays



Once again, LEO Club and the Spackenkill community are "adopting" families in the District for the holidays. The willingness of people to help others is awe inspiring and spirit lifting. The pandemic has affected everyone, but those struggling before are even more deeply impacted. At the same time, many who never thought they would need help have lost their jobs and exhausted their savings. Due to COVID and the possibility of schools being fully remote, we are asking for donations in check form. Please write a check in any amount to the **Spackenkill High School Activity Fund** and put **LEO Club** in the memo line.

The check can be:

- dropped off at Spackenkill High School main office (while we are in Hybrid 1); *or*
- placed in the District Office dropbox in an envelope marked LEO Club (the District Office is located behind Todd Middle School and has a secure dropbox outside the front door); *or*
- mailed to LEO Club, Spackenkill District Office, 15 Croft Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603.

We ask that you make your donation by December 18.

Families seeking assistance can contact their school's nurse or social worker.

Nassau:

Nora Bergstraser, MSN, RN: nora.bergstraser@sufsdny.org

Melissa Coyle: melissa.coyle@sufsdny.org

Hagan:

Sharon Dooley-Russo, RN: sharon.dooleyrusso@sufsdny.org

Joanne Shaffer: joanne.shaffer@sufsdny.org

Todd:

Alyssa Karcz, RN: alyssa.karcz@sufsdny.org

Kate Casucci: kate.casucci@sufsdny.org

SHS:

Liz Giancaspro, BSN, RN: elizabeth.giancaspro@sufsdny.org

Tracie Phillips: tracie.phillips@sufsdny.org

Thank you and Happy Holidays!

Spack Team Supports Local Charity



The Spackenkill Football Team and Booster Club has raised \$875 for Meals on Wheels of Greater Poughkeepsie.

The organization is using the money to fund "snow bags"—a two-day supply of food that meal recipients can simply heat-and-eat in the event that inclement weather interferes with home deliveries. We are proud of the team and coach Clinton DeSouza for their determination in making this happen.

Left: Meals on Wheels sent a picture of the meals lined up under a holiday tree, ready to be delivered. The letters attached to the bags thank the Spackenkill community for its generosity.

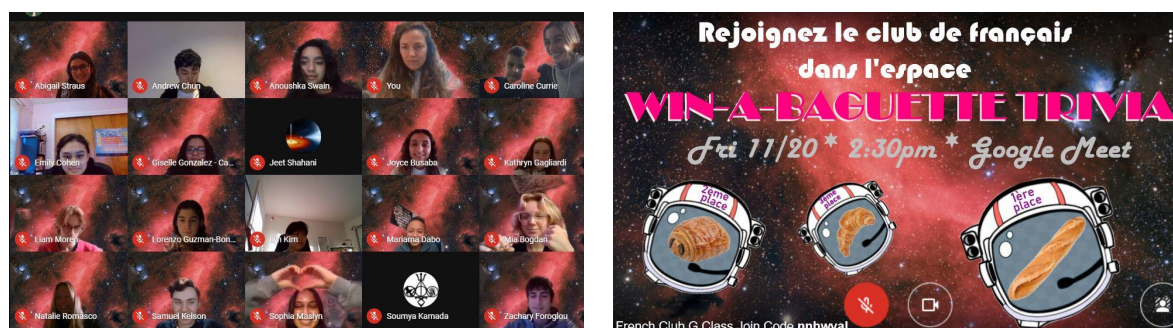
Club Celebrates National French Week



In honor of National French Week, the High School French Club hosted daily virtual events for the entire student body on November 16-20. The events had a great turnout and high level of participation and interaction. All posts, surveys, stories, and competitions were posted to their Instagram page @spackfrenchclub.

Monday was designated Madame Monday (a surprise tribute to French Club advisor and teacher Brittany Hart!). Tuesday was French Art Day, which explored Neoclassicism, Romanticism, Realism, and Impressionism. Wednesday was French Science Day, highlighting France's contributions to science and technology. Thursday and Friday were themed Win-A-Baguette French Trivia (two separate contests on Kahoot).

The winners of Thursday's trivia contest were Abigail Straus (1st place), Soumya Kamada (2nd place), and Zach Foroglou (3rd place). The winners of Friday's trivia contest were Clare Sottile (1st place), Soumya Kamada (2nd place), and Emily Cohen (3rd place). Congratulations to all!



Above: Scenes from the Kahoot trivia contest in action on Friday, November 19.

Enjoy a restful weekend.

Sincerely,

Paul M. Fanuele, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



15 Croft Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603; 845-463-7800