



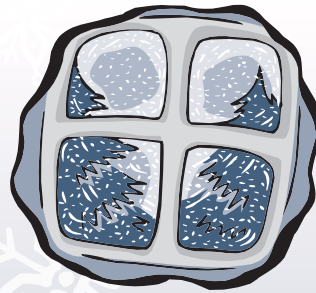
## Revised Protocol for Snow Day Closings

A revised weather-related school closing protocol will be in effect for the 2014-2015 school year. Due to the excessive amount of weather related closings last year, the district is re-examining its procedures.

During 2013-14 there were at least two occasions when the weather cleared by approximately 8 a.m., with the remainder of the day free of bad weather and safe for school to be open. Annually, the district plans for five full snow days within the instructional calendar, which when used do not have any impact on the planned breaks and still allow the district to meet the New York State required days of student attendance.

Over the last few years all of the planned snow days were used, and last year a planned Superintendent's Conference Day in January was restructured in order to not exceed our allowable snow days, protect planned breaks and still meet the required 180 days required for student attendance.

*continued on page 2*



## Survey Polls Residents about Dawson Field



The school district is exploring options about the status of Dawson Field and has developed an online survey to solicit information and participation in the conversation about the future of the field.

It is vital that the district receives input from residents, both those residents that live along the perimeter of Dawson Field, but also those who do not, but make up a critical mass of the district residents.

The survey can be found on the district website homepage at [www.depewschools.org](http://www.depewschools.org). The survey will close on Friday, Dec. 5.

As you may or may not know, in 1996 Dawson Field was leased to the Village of Depew, which included the full maintenance of the field. The Depew varsity baseball team still played its home games at the field. At the time of turning the responsibility of the field maintenance over to the Village of Depew, the Depew Schools Buildings and Grounds had approximately seven employees.

In 2011, when the Village of Depew notified the district that it no longer wanted to lease Dawson Field, the buildings and grounds department had only its current staffing of three employees, plus one laborer. The past two springs have been the

*continued on page 2*

## Cool Ride to School

Good behavior in school and exhibiting good character with classmates earned two fifth-graders a special ride to school on a fire truck in October. Joshua Traina and Hailey Byrd were picked up at their homes by the South Line fire department and driven to Cayuga Heights Elementary. Joshua was accompanied by his sister, Kayla. The fifth-grade teachers nominated students for this special ride; all names were put into a hat and two were pulled out randomly. Joshua and Hailey were all smiles as they exited the fire trucks.

October was Fire Prevention month and members of the fire department spent Oct. 10 at Cayuga Heights Elementary sharing tips with students about fire safety. Members of the fire company have been providing this program for many years to students at every grade level in the building. A highlight for younger students is getting chosen to dress up in the firefighter's uniform.



## Survey Polls Residents about Dawson Field

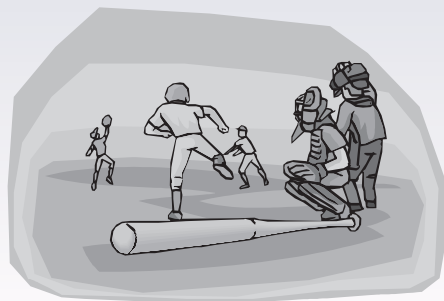
*continued from page 1*

most difficult to maintain Dawson Field, along with all of the district's property, due to the extreme precipitation levels. These environmental conditions make it very difficult to maintain any field, as the field needs to properly dry before heavy equipment can be taken out onto the surface.

Currently, the district is working with a variety of options, but focusing on these three as of right now:

- 1) The district could work to secure another lease, similar to what we had with the Village of Depew for the use and maintenance of the property;
- 2) If a viable lease cannot be secured, the district could add back into the operating budget an additional buildings and grounds employee to assist with the maintenance of our grounds at a projected cost of \$64,000;
- 3.) Perhaps the district could consider a combination of both, securing a lease and adding a seasonal buildings and grounds employee.

The data from this survey will be used as the district moves forward with making a determination on the status of Dawson Field. If you should have any questions about the future of Dawson Field, please contact the superintendent's office at (716) 686-5104.



## District is Awarded Lead Role in STLE Grant

Depew Union Free School District will act as the lead agency on a \$922,500 leadership development grant awarded by the NYS Education Department.

Depew and its two co-applicants, Maryvale and Clarence school districts, will use the "Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Dissemination: Principal Leadership," grant monies for training sessions that will concentrate on improving instruction relating to the Common Core Learning Standards.

In 2013, Depew received a STLE grant that focused on teacher and principal leadership development. The district completes the second year of that grant in June and the new award allows for continued study, collaboration and training among the three school districts.



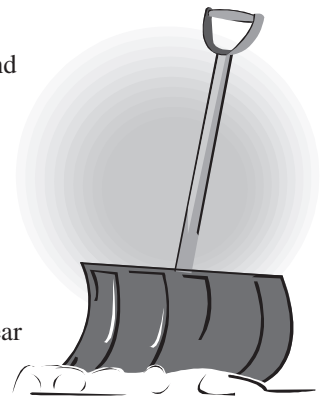
## Revised Protocol for Snow Day Closings

*continued from page 1*

Therefore, for the 2014-2015 school year the district will be planning for and employing, when appropriate, a one-hour and two-hour delay schedule for those bad weather days that are forecast to not last beyond the early morning hours. The availability of a delayed day would still allow the district to count the shortened school day as an actual student attendance day and at the same time protect the safety of all children traveling to school by using a delayed start. As a result, the following protocol will be utilized:

- A) On those bad weather days, when the weather would appear to be ending on or about 6 a.m., the district will call for a one-hour delay. Therefore, the Middle and High School will begin their day at 8:40 a.m. and Cayuga Heights Elementary will begin their day at 10:05 a.m. with scheduled bus pick-ups, for both in-district and out-of-district placements, to also be delayed by exactly one-hour. However, if the out-of-district placements close for the day, there will not be any pick-up for those students. Breakfast will still be served for our students on a one-hour delay. Please note that the dismissals for each of the buildings will remain the same and not be affected by a delayed start.
- B) On those bad weather days, when the weather would appear to be ending on or about 7 a.m., the district will call for a two-hour delay. Therefore, the Middle and High School will begin their day at 9:40 a.m. and Cayuga Heights Elementary will begin their day at 11:05 a.m. with scheduled bus pick-ups, for both in-district and out-of-district placements, to also be delayed by exactly two hours. However, if the out-of-district placements close for the day, there will not be any pick-up for those students. Please note that the dismissals for each of the buildings will remain the same and not be affected by a delayed start.

It is important to note that in either scenario, if the bad weather persists throughout the morning and the delayed time period, which would indicate that there is a concern for student safety, the district would then make the decision to close and call for a full snow day. Questions about the new protocol can be directed to the superintendent's office at (716) 686-5104.



## Message from the Superintendent

# Celebrating Alumni Who Have Used their Time and Talents to Make a Difference



On Thursday, Oct. 16, with over 200 people in attendance, the Depew Union Free School District continued a fairly new tradition in the High School cafeteria, by inducting 23 distinguished alumni into the Wall of Fame.

Those of you familiar with Depew Schools know that tradition is so very important to its culture and this event has become a critical part of the cultural fabric that celebrates the lives of the Depew Alumni elite.

On an annual basis, during Homecoming Week, alumni will be honored on the Wall of Fame, for all current and future students to experience. The individuals, who were inducted, are people who, after graduation, greatly contributed to the well-being of our society through their hard work, talents and leadership. Their achievements are in the realms of scholarship, leadership, community service, and character and this honor bestowed upon them, is a wonderful way for the school and community to recognize and celebrate the choices, and sometimes the sacrifices, that each of them has made. The four pillars of elite Depew Alumni, in which each of our inductees have excelled in are scholarship, leadership, community service, and character, which are not random characteristics, but the core of a fulfilled and fulfilling life. The most important thing to remember is that

each of these characteristics is the sum of many individual decisions. They embody a positive attitude backed by purpose.

My hope is that for each current and future student to reflect on the names of the Wall of Fame and then cultivate this same attitude in their own lives. This year's Wall of Fame alumni represent 23 graduates from 1928 through 1989, who have had a significant impact on the lives of our Depew School-Community and beyond.

This group of special individuals represents teachers, attorneys, architects, military officers, business owners, college professors, engineers, pharmaceutical district managers, glaziers, musicians, nurses, retail senior managers and deputy highway superintendents. These are only their vocational titles; it does not in any way represent what they, as individuals, have truly become and offered society, which in many ways is so much more commendable and valuable.

As a school leader, I understand that it is my sole responsibility to prepare young people to be successful in life. For the most part, society relates this success in life to what career pathway one ends up on; I tend to disagree. What I stress is not just a prestigious career, but a life; a family life, a spiritual life, a life of service, a life of commitment and dedication to a cause, a life

of being a positive role model, or a life of happiness.

These individuals have demonstrated success on many of these levels and have positively represented this school-community wherever they have gone; this is why they were chosen to be honored. The 2014 Depew Alumni Wall of Fame is an engraved glass plaque located in the High School cafeteria, which will be on display from this point forward for all current and future students of the Depew Union Free School District to experience and reflect.

The 2014 Wall of Fame alumni are as follows:

Margaret McEneny Beardsell, U.S. Navy Capt. Tammy P. Tideswell, Barry Nelson Covert, Virginia Beardsell, Daniel L. Zwolinski, Bernie DiPizio, Dr. Elizabeth Cappella, John M. Fragale, Barbette Kokeny-DeMarco, Donald G. Smith, Jr., U.S. Army Col. Jeffrey J. Goble, Michael Barker, Robert W. Sharpe, Martin Connelly, Ronald Gorski, James Brown, Melissa Gorski Wiechelt, Peggy M. Wojnowski (Goble), U.S. Army Spec. Corey G. Moe, James M. Marone, Louis Cacciotti, Leonard T. Oleksy and Anthony Gorski.

Sincerely,  
Jeffrey R. Rabey, Ph.D., Superintendent

## *Once a Wildcat, Always a Wildcat!!!*







## Alumni in the Spotlight as Music Teachers, Performers

If you think you recognize someone who is performing on one of the many WNY stages, it could be because that person is a graduate of Depew High School. Among those who are currently “in the spotlight” in our area as well as away from home:



*James Marone, a music alum from the class of 1985, speaks to students during the 2014 Wall of Fame daytime assembly.*

Nancy Recuperero, '81, who performs with the Lancaster town band, Erie County Wind Ensemble, Marilla Fire Company Band, St. Jude the Apostle Folk Group, UB Basketball Pep Band and Lancaster Youth Bureau summer musical pit band.

Cindy (Heim) Santangelo, '83, has been working as a musical theater performer in NYC.

James Marone, '85, (son of retired DHS nurse Jane Marone) is the Sweet Home High School orchestra conductor and was inducted into the Alumni Wall of Fame during Spirit Week.

Dave Marciniak, '86, who performed this summer in Shakespeare at Delaware Park, is in the November production of “Nuts” at Desiderio’s Dinner Theater in Lancaster.

Tom Sartori, '87, performed the national anthem before the Buffalo Bills’ home opener. He is an entertainer/recording artist who performs around the country (especially Florida) but can often be seen locally.

Terry Buchwald, '89, also an entertainer/recording artist, performs locally and nationally.

Jeff Palmer, '89, is an instrumental music teacher in the Amherst School District.

Kathy Measer, '90, performs with the Lancaster town band.

Mark Wiech, '91, is the Holland High School band director.

Bridget (Olear) Nye, '92, is an instrumental music teacher in Alden.

Thomas J. Mudd, '99, is a vocal /general music teacher in the Buffalo Public Schools.

Alan Knowles, '00, performs with the Lancaster town band.

Jenny Gembka, '00, is an active member of the Brazen-Faced Varlets theatrical troupe. In October she served as director of a staged reading of “Twelve Angry Women” at Empire State College.

Melissa (Wierzbowski) Zielinski, '02, teaches instrumental music on Long Island.

*continued on page 9*



## Alumni Honorees Speak to Students

The 23 alumni who were chosen as this year’s Wall of Fame recipients come from all walks of life, but what they share is the ability to use their time and talents for good.

The honorees represent teachers, attorneys, architects, military officers, business owners, college professors, engineers, pharmaceutical district managers, glaziers, musicians, nurses, retail senior managers and deputy highway superintendents.

Several honorees spoke to students during an afternoon assembly on Thursday, Oct. 16. They spoke about their career challenges and successes and gave the students advice on a number of topics.

Later that evening, a reception and award ceremony was held in the high school cafeteria. At the evening ceremony each honoree was escorted to the stage by a high school student. An engraved glass plaque, with each inductee’s name and year of graduation, was unveiled. The alumni plaques are displayed on the cafeteria wall behind the stage. The alumni event, which began in 2012, has grown in popularity and over 200 people attended the evening ceremony.

The 2014 Alumni Wall of Fame inductees and year of graduation:

Honored in the Scholar category are Margaret McEneny Beardsell (1928), U.S. Navy Capt. Tammy P. Tidswell (1981), Barry Nelson Covert (1982).

Honored in the Community Service category are Virginia Beardsell (1969), Daniel L. Zwolinski (1954), Bernie DiPizio (1958), Dr. Elizabeth Cappella (1963), John M. Fragale (1965), Barbette Kokeny-DeMarco (1976), Donald G. Smith, Jr. (1979), U.S. Army Col. Jeffrey J. Goble (1981), Michael Barker (1989).

Honored in the Decade category are Robert W. Sharpe (1952), Martin Connelly (1955), Ronald Gorski (1961), James Brown (1965), Melissa Gorski Wiechelt (1981), Peggy M. Wojnowski (Goble) (1982), U.S. Army Spec. Corey G. Moe (1989).

Honored in the Arts category is James M. Marone (1985).

Honored in the Athletics category are Louis Cacciotti (1961), Leonard T. Oleksy (1961), Anthony Gorski (1983).

View photo slideshows and read the Inductee Biography Booklets at [www.depewschools.org](http://www.depewschools.org), under Quick Links/Wall of Fame.



## College Fair for Juniors, Seniors



The WNY College Consortium was held in the high school small gym on Oct. 10 for juniors and seniors to get information from local colleges and universities. This annual event is held every October and arranged by the high school counseling center.

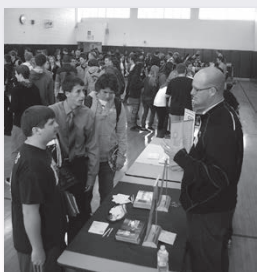
The following schools had representatives on hand; Alfred State College, Alfred University, Bryant & Stratton College, Buffalo State College, Canisius College, Daemen College, D'Youville College, Erie Community College, Fredonia State College, Genesee Community College, Hilbert College,

Medaille College, Niagara County Community College, Niagara University, St. Bonaventure University, Trocaire



College, University of Buffalo and Villa Maria College.

Gathering information on colleges were (l to r) juniors Jacob Lenartowicz, Luke Mlodozienec and Robert Staniszewski. Also pictured is Tyler Martin, a junior, speaking with a representative from NCCC.



## Depew Academy of Finance Receives Grant Award

The Depew High School Academy of Finance received a \$13,800 grant award from the Discover Pathway to Financial Success Grant program. The grant award will be used to buy a class set of Microsoft Surface Pros, a color printer, toner and jump drives. The AOF program, which began in September with 14 students, provides opportunities to work directly with local business leaders to learn what it takes to be successful in the working world. The new technology will provide students a way to increase their financial literacy through use of online resources.

As a kickoff to the year, the Academy hosted a picnic for all students. Pictured are AOF students, business partners and school district officials.



## Students to Perform in All-State Band



*Pictured (L to R) are Sara Snyder, Sara Keller and Katelynn Frawley.*

Three students from the Depew High School concert band, under the direction of George Kroetsch, were selected to perform in the New York State Area All-State Band. The festival was held at SUNY Fredonia and concluded with a concert at the Rockefeller Arts Center on campus. Performing on clarinet was senior Sara Keller and junior Katelynn Frawley. Performing on bass clarinet was junior Sara Snyder. These students were selected to perform based on their very high performance scores at the All State solo festival.

## French Club Officers Named

Nearly 50 students attended the first meeting of the DHS French Club in September. Students enjoyed delicious éclair cakes prepared by French students. Events for the year were planned to include guest speakers, cultural celebrations, a Sabres game, and attending a performance of Cinderella at Shea's Performing Arts Center in Buffalo. This year's officers are Emily Law, president; Morgan Grosch and Amber Napierski, vice presidents; Jenna Donati and Katelynn Frawley, secretary; Allison Torsey, treasurer; Lois Becker and Steven Fusani, Public Relations. French club members wish to thank the community for their support of the Chipotle fundraiser which raised approximately \$350 for club activities.





## Family Tailgate Fundraiser was Fun for All

An Interview with Michael Barker

Michael Barker, president of the Depew Wildcat Alumni Association, answers a few questions about the success of the family tailgating event held Friday, Sept. 19 and about the alumni organization.



### What prompted you to organize the Alumni Family Tailgating Event?

The idea for the event came from brainstorming several different fundraising ideas with the alumni leadership team. The goal of any event that we discussed was to increase awareness of the Depew Wildcat Alumni Association and to share our overall aligned mission statement. We wanted to plan for a family friendly event, have live music, good food, adult and children's entertainment and have fun while raising some money for the establishment of scholarships, support the Depew Wall of Fame and give back to the students of the Depew Union Free School District and the surrounding communities. We believe that the alumni tailgating event idea was the right event to kick off our association and fundraising efforts. In addition, building the

event around the home opener for the varsity football game and grand opening of the new concession stand was a perfect situation to ensure a successful event.

### How was the turnout?

We had over 250 attendees and volunteers attend this event. This included current Depew students, faculty, alumni and retired teachers. In addition, the majority of the event sponsors and donations we received were all from former Depew Wildcat graduates who are making significant contributions in the local and national business community.

### In your view, what was the best thing about the Sept. 19 event?

Via the Alumni Facebook page, one of the comments received was, "What a great event held by the Wildcat Alumni Association tonight, if you were unable to attend, mark your calendar for next year, this is a can't miss event for Alumni family and friends, Thanks."

The best thing was having the opportunity to connect with the Depew and surrounding communities, current students, administration and faculty, reconnect with Wildcat Alumni, friends and family. We featured musical entertainment by Terry Buchwald, a 1989 alumni, who performed his "Elvis - A Tribute to the King." In addition, we offered a kid zone that featured giveaways, face painting, a clown making animal balloons, select carnival games, crafts and an opportunity to write thank you notes to our U.S. military personnel. The Depew Wildcat cheerleaders and high school band also performed at the event. In addition, the Depew Fire Department and Depew and Lancaster Police Departments also actively participated in this year's event.



### Other events planned this year?

We are looking to hold one additional fundraising event this year. The details have not yet been finalized. Alumni and friends should continue to visit our webpage at <http://catsalumniassoc.yolasite.com> for announcements on upcoming events or to share their contact information to ensure that they are included on our alumni e-mail distribution list.

### How can alumni contact you?

Information on membership can be found on <http://catsalumniassoc.yolasite.com>.

Email: [catsalumniassoc@gmail.com](mailto:catsalumniassoc@gmail.com)

Follow on Facebook and Twitter:  
Depew Wildcat Alumni Association, @CatsAlumniAssoc





# DEPEW HIGH SCHOOL

## Depew High School Celebrates Spirit Week



## Senior Engineering Education Students Launch Big in Trebuchet Competition



The Depew team placed fourth in the distance launch with 286 feet in the annual trebuchet competition in October at the Great Pumpkin Farm in Clarence. The team used a brand new design for their trebuchet, which was developed by working with Team NASAW, North American Sliding Axle Whipper from RIT. Depew students were also shown on a WIVB Ch. 4 news feature: <http://wivb.com/2014/10/19/students-launch-pumpkins-for-cash>.





## Physical Education Teacher Named Western Zone Amazing Person

Stacy Walker, a physical education teacher at Depew High School, has been named the 2014 Western Zone Amazing Person by the New York State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (NYS AHPERD). Ms. Walker was selected for this prestigious honor for her exceptional contribution to the field of physical education and for her dedication to the Depew community. NYS AHPERD is a professional organization composed primarily of health, physical education, recreation and dance teachers; community and worksite health professionals and youth coaches who are interested in promoting health, physical education, recreation, and dance for students in kindergarten through college. She will receive her award at the NYS AHPERD conference at Turning Stone on Nov. 20 with other recipients from across the state.



## Alumni

*Continued from page 5*

Sara (Marioses) Mitch, '02, will appear as Abigail in a November production of "The Crucible," presented by American Repertory Theatre. Among the many other shows she has done, Sara is also a cast member in the film "Game Changers," which is currently in post-production.

Sean Murphy, '04, is a performer at Disney World, and his work includes dancing down Main Street in the daily parades.

Joe Spencer, '04, was the DHS musical's drama director. He relocated to Los Angeles.

Lyndsey (Thuerck) Hibbard, '05, has returned from three years performing for Disney Cruise Lines. She recently played the lead role of Janet in musicalfare's season opening production of "The Drowsy Chaperone."

Chelsea Mang, '07, now a music teacher in the Cheektowaga Central School District will be the DHS musical's drama director.

Ricky Needham, '10, will be starring in the lead role in "Footloose" at Buffalo State College's Warren Enters Theater in November.

Andrea Labounty, '10, who has occasionally played with the Lancaster Town Band, is completing her master's degree in music education.

Brittany Bassett, '11, performed in Shakespeare at Delaware Park this summer and will continue doing shows, in her senior year at Fredonia. After college, she plans to head for NYC.

Devan Brady, '12, is doing an internship with Full Circle Productions at 710 Main where she helped to produce a video for Buffalo's Curtain Up in September.

Joe Franjoine, '12, is already doing stage tech work that takes him to performance venues hundreds of miles away from his "home base" at UB.

Kevin Stevens, '12, is a musical theater major who is studying and performing at Fredonia.

Christian Hehr, '13, has also performed for the Lancaster Youth Bureau's summer show as well as other venues in the area.

## Emily Law Receives Academic Recognition



Emily Law has been named a Commended Student in the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program. A letter of commendation will be presented to Emily. About 34,000 commended students throughout the nation are being recognized for their exceptional academic promise. Although they will not continue in the 2015 competition for

National Merit Scholarship awards, commended students placed among the top five percent of more than 1.5 million students who entered the 2015 competition by taking the 2013 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

## Summer Study for Teachers

Over the summer, more than 30 Depew Middle and High School teachers took part in a book study of "Mindset" by Carol S. Dweck, Ph.D. Teachers read this excellent work which sets forth how to approach goals with a growth rather than fixed attitude. It demonstrates how a growth mindset motivates students to achieve academic success. In addition, the book explains how educators, parents, coaches and community leaders can adopt this approach to achieve personal and professional success. This text shows how a simple idea about the brain can create a love of learning and a resilience that is the basis of great accomplishment in every area.



## Depew Middle School Parent Workshop Series

Depew Middle School, in October, hosted its first in a series of parent workshops on The Teen Years. The first workshop was co-sponsored by the PTO and focused on Teen Dilemmas: Dealing with Social Media and Drugs. Presenters were from Renaissance House Face to Face program, The Center for Missing and Exploited Children and the Depew Police Department.

The second workshop will take place in early December. The Center for Missing and Exploited Children will return to DMS to address the topic of cyberbullying. By the end of the evening parents should have a better understanding of cyberbullying and have learned a set of strategies to use should this happen to their child.

The third workshop will take place in January. This workshop will be on Helping Your Child Be Successful: Using the Seven Habits. It will feature a discussion of how the Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens and The Leader in Me program can help students be more successful in school. This is an exciting topic as it connects directly to the Leader in Me program at Cayuga Heights Elementary.

## 8th Grade Class Hosts Events

The eighth-grade class at Depew Middle School held a special fundraiser on Friday, Nov. 14 – the Second Annual Holiday Babysitting. For two hours, students watched and entertained children with holiday videos, coloring, crafts, open gym and other fun activities, while their parents did holiday shopping. The eighth-grade class is also sponsoring a night at Lasertron for all Middle School students later in November.

## Bullying Assembly Has Unique Interactive Aspect with Depew Students as Performers

Depew seventh-, eighth- and ninth-graders attended an assembly on bullying in October unlike any they have attended before as they watched their fellow classmates bring bullying to life during a 25-minute performance.

On stage, middle and high school students, acting as victims, described the impact of bullying. Other students sitting in the audience performed in the role of bystanders and brought a unique interactive twist to the assembly by responding to the victims on stage. Students in the audience heard the bystanders respond in various ways; some made excuses for not helping the victim, others offered help.



The student performers had to memorize their dialogue and assume the role of either a victim or a bystander for the assembly program, “Bystander: Silent No More.” The multi-media program explored the emotions and actions that fuel the bullies, the victims and the bystanders.

The value of having student performers is that they can connect to their classmates in the audience. The assembly addresses a key point: the actions and words of bystanders can help end bullying and make school a place where every student feels safe.

“Many children who witness a bullying situation know that what is happening is wrong, but they don’t know what to do about it. This program helps create awareness that bystanders have a very important role in any bullying situation. They can encourage bullying behavior, discourage bullying behavior, or do nothing. We want to empower children to make a conscious choice to discourage bullying behavior and reach out to those who are the victims,” said Belinda Westfield, middle school counselor.

At the adolescent level, students say and do so much without regard to the lasting effects or consequences. It is imperative that students begin to recognize the weight of their words.

“Bystander: Silent No More” opens the eyes of students who focus solely on themselves and their happiness. It allows them to understand the power they have in ruining someone’s life and the power they have in making someone’s life better. This assembly program teaches students to care about those around them.

## Middle School Character Education Program

The Depew Middle School character education program is taking on a new look beginning this year. After reviewing the program, the character education team created an even more engaging and focused program. The team has developed the program to have multiple tiers.

School-wide, students are recognized every five weeks for exhibiting outstanding character traits. These students will have their pictures displayed on the character wall located in the front lobby. Students named as character ambassadors will participate in the Character Council of WNY annual day-long training and workshop. These student leaders will help drive a student-centered component of our program within the building.

The kick-off to character education was the “Bystander: Silent No More” assembly program in October.

Character education at DMS also features lessons from our school counselors as well as monthly classroom lessons. Each monthly lesson is focused on a character trait. Students will watch a video clip from a current hit movie and discuss how that clip relates to the trait of the month. Student surveys, given in the fall and in June, will help measure the effectiveness of these programs.



## Ambitious Reading Goal Can Spur Academic Success in Students

If you see a Cayuga Heights Elementary student with his or her nose in a book, take a moment to congratulate them. They are helping their school reach an ambitious goal of reading 30,000 books by June between home and school reading. The administrators and teachers at Cayuga Heights know it is a lot of books, but the benefits of trying to reach that goal make it a worthwhile effort.

“Frequent reading builds vocabulary and knowledge students need in order to become better readers and writers,” said Sheri Barsottelli, a literacy coach at Cayuga Heights. “Research shows that students who read the most for fun do the best in school. They are the students who are the best academic readers and writers.”

Teachers read frequently to students in class and will include those books in the building totals. Throughout the building, monthly class totals will be displayed outside each classroom. Building totals will be calculated at the end of each month and added to the “Today a Reader, Tomorrow a Leader” bulletin board in the main hallway.

“Just like learning a sport, musical instrument, or other hobby, practice is necessary in reading. The more one practices, the better they will be,” said Marnie Belle-Isle, a literacy coach at Cayuga Heights.

Here are some tips for parents to help choose books:

- It is necessary to read a variety of books to best build knowledge of words and of the world.
- However, reading a lot on one topic is also important to learn about that one topic, whether it is something a child is interested in for their own purposes or something they are learning about in school.
- The reading level of the text matters. Students should be reading books on their own that they can understand on their own. They can read easier books (sometimes) for fun.
- They can read more challenging books with support from parents or teachers. Children are never too old to be read aloud to, as long as they are also spending quality time reading independently.

Parents can help by:

- Creating excitement about reading by finding books they want to read. Many authors have said something like, “if you don’t like to read, you just haven’t found the right book”.
- Thinking about what kids like to watch (TV or movies) and find books with similar characters, settings or themes.
- Consider the questions your child is asking and find books on those topics.
- Taking your child to the library and just let them try out books.
- Asking your child’s teachers or librarian for suggestions.
- Sharing with your child what you liked to read at their age.

## Peer Helper Program:

## Cayuga’s Leaders in Conflict Resolution



Fifth-graders chosen for the Peer Helper training program were officially recognized for duty in a recent ceremony. These fifth-graders were chosen by their fourth-grade teachers based on their ability to interact with classmates in a positive, productive manner. Training, which took place over the summer and into the fall, focused on conflict resolution strategies that can be used with students in the elementary building that may be having a disagreement. Students took the “Peer Helper Pledge” where they promised to be a positive role model and to try to help others solve problems in a peaceful way. These students will assist in defusing possible conflicts among their peers in the cafeteria, hallways, on the bus or in the classroom. Peer Helpers, identified by blue and white badges, assist students to talk out concerns in a fair, reasonable manner, and guide the students with solving their own problems. Pictured (front) Samantha Arnone, Miranda Arena, Lauren Arena, Dylan Gurnari, Sam Radka, Lorenzo Arricale, Melissa Petrelli, (back) Rhegan Zubler, Hannah Stocklosa, Mary Grace Bauer, Nick Karnyski, Michael Robinson, Charles Moore, Mia Jackson, Annabella Hopkins. Not pictured: Tyler Winkel.

## Tales from the Fourth Grade

Fourth-graders at Cayuga Heights Elementary started the year reading the classic novel, “Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing” by Judy Blume. Students used their creativity and cooperative skills by working in groups to complete projects about the novel including talk show skits, commercials, comic strips, mobiles or game boards. Several students even sampled a version of Juicy-O juice as featured in the book. The high-quality finished products and exciting presentations certainly captivated the classroom audience and added more fun to this literature unit. Pictured are Abby Fisher, Pamela McCarty and Lexi Tamrowski playing one of the homemade game boards.





Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
P A I D  
Permit No. 34  
Depew, New York

## DEPEW PUBLIC SCHOOLS

5201 S. Transit Road  
Depew, New York 14043

### Board of Education

David Sheff, President  
Barbara Staebell, Vice President  
Nancy Fumerelle, Trustee  
Donna Kapinos, Trustee  
Patrick Law, Trustee  
John Spencer, Trustee  
Justin P. Young, Trustee

Jeffrey R. Rabey, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

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

# ‘Leader in Me’ Program Empowers CHE Students to Reach Their Full Potential

This school year, students at Cayuga Heights Elementary School will be hearing a lot about leadership. They will be hearing the phrase “seven habits” and learning how the seven habits can help them reach their full potential academically and personally.

The seven habits are the guiding principles of the Leader in Me program, which Cayuga Heights started using in September.

Under this program, the entire school will have a common language about student responsibility, problem solving and character. Students will hear about the seven habits in class, on the morning announcements and throughout their day.

“It empowers children to be leaders. It builds their confidence. Overall, it improves the social, emotional and academic growth of students so each child can achieve their personal best in each area,” said Michelle Kudla, Cayuga Heights principal.

The Seven Habits are:

1. Be proactive
2. Begin with the end in mind
3. Put first things first
4. Think win-win
5. Seek first to understand before being understood
6. Synergize
7. Sharpen the saw



Every month, Cayuga Heights will focus on one of the habits through classroom activities and building-wide assemblies. A bulletin board in the school lobby highlights the habits.

The program is based on the book by Stephen R. Covey “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People”.