



# PIONEER CONNECT

September 2023

PIONEER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT, YORKSHIRE, NY

## NEW STAFF JOIN PIONEER

Twenty-one new teachers and related staff have joined the Pioneer School District family. Those who attended our New Educator Academy over the summer shared some information about themselves for this issue of Connect.



**LAURA GIBOO**

**LAURA GIBOO** (Grade 4 teacher at Arcade) – Mrs. Giboo is a native of Holland who resides in Centerville with husband Marty and children Kyle (age 4) and Kaitlyn (2). She attended Medaille College, earning a bachelors degree in Education and a masters degree in Literacy Education. For seven years prior to her current position, Mrs. Giboo was a literary teacher in the Cuba-Rushford School District. “I subbed for Pioneer in the beginning of my career, so I’m excited to be back and part of the Panther family!” She added she enjoys the outdoors, spending time with family and friends, and curling up with a good book.

**ALLISON BARNES** (Special Education, Pioneer Middle School) – Mrs. Barnes, who hails from Rushford, was raised in Bolivar and earned her education degrees at SUNY Cortland and

SUNY Brockport. She and her husband Will raised two sons who are now ages 24 and 27. She has previously worked in education in area schools and at St. Bonaventure University. Mrs. Barnes said she is eager to work at Pioneer thanks to its “attention to detail with excellence in education.” Away from school she is a trustee for Rushford Library and enjoys traveling and gardening. She also has “two crazy Labrador retrievers at home.”

**CASIE CHAPMAN** (Grade 3 teacher at Delevan) – Mrs. Chapman resides in Arcade with her husband, Nate, and their three Basset hounds. She is starting her 11th year in teaching, having worked previously at Victor Intermediate (Grade 6) and Holland Central School (Grades 2-3). Mrs. Chapman, a Holland native, did her studies at SUNY Fredonia and Walden University. She holds an associates degree in General Studies, a bachelors in Education and a Masters degree in Education. She said she is “excited to be working in my home district. The opportunities students and teachers have here are fantastic!” She said she enjoys swimming and has been a lifeguard since age 15. She also competes in the Quad-County Cornhole League.

**KELSEY EBERHARD** (Grade 4 teacher at Arcade) – Ms. Eberhard said she is eager “to meet all the new people and join the Pioneer family!” She is a native of Orchard Park currently residing in Hamburg with her dog, Loki (age 2). She holds

degrees in Childhood Education and Special Education 1-6 from Buffalo State, and prior to coming to Pioneer worked at Maryvale Intermediate and St. Gregory the Great School. Ms. Eberhard’s interests include reading, hiking, digital curriculum design, and cooking.

**MEGAN SONNER** (Special Education at Pioneer High School) – Pioneer Class of 2017 member Megan Sonner resides in Arcade and attended SUNY Fredonia, earning a bachelors degree in Adolescence Education in Biology and Chemistry, and a masters degree in Curriculum and Instruction in Inclusive Education. She is engaged to Zach Wiedemann and they plan a wedding in Summer 2024. She was previously employed by C-A BOCES as a science teacher at Pioneer High. Ms. Sonner said she is excited to be working alongside some of her former teachers. She is active in swimming and wakeboarding, and also enjoys painting.

**ALEXA POHLMAN** (Special Education) – Miss Pohlman is from Lancaster and attended Buffalo State, earning degrees in Elementary Education and Special Education 1-6. She continues to work toward her masters degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a concentration in Early Childhood. She worked previously at St. Mark School, and enjoys running, yoga and snowboarding. Miss Pohlmann has a 19-year-old cat and can often be found watching the Buffalo Bills.



**MELISSA KEEFE**

**MELISSA KEEFE** (Occupational Therapist) – Mrs. Keefe resides in Holland with her husband Ryan, and earned her masters degree in Occupational Therapy from Utica College. She has worked in OT in California, and held contract positions in various school districts. Mrs. Keefe said she has enjoyed meeting new colleagues, working with students, and helping them reach their potential. She lists among her hobbies: hiking, snowboarding and traveling.

**SUSAN WASNER** (Occupational Therapist) – Susan Wasner is from East Aurora and studied at the University at Buffalo. She holds bachelors degrees in Occupational Therapy and Psychology. She is married to Walter, and they have two children—Madeline (age 20) and Noah (15). Mrs. Wasner has worked at Cheektowaga Schools and various other districts. She is an avid hiker and coffee drinker, and said she has enjoyed meeting other teachers and being part of the Pioneer educational team.

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*(Continued from front)*



**KAREN JABLONSKI**

**KAREN JABLONSKI** (Special Education at Pioneer High School) – Ms. Jablonski is a familiar face at Pioneer, having been a student, coach and teacher here. She was formerly a 6:1:1 Special Education teacher for C-A BOCES at Pioneer for five years, with additional experience at Wellsville Central (Physical Education and Credit Recovery teacher). A Machias native, Ms. Jablonski completed degree work at SUNY Brockport (bachelors in Physical Education, masters in Pedagogy and Athletic Administration), Emporia College (Health Education certification) and Empire College (Students with Disabilities 7-12 Generalist). “This community invested a lot in me with both my upbringing and education,” she said. “I can now give back to show my appreciation for the support I received. Additionally, I am impressed by the school’s emphasis on cultivating a positive school culture that promotes kindness, respect and diversity. I am eager to contribute to the growth and development of each student, ensuring they receive the tools and resources necessary to reach their full potential.” Ms. Jablonski’s interests include playing sports and outdoor activities (golf, hiking, kayaking, skiing and 5K races), collecting sports memorabilia and Lego sets, and following the Bills and Syracuse men’s basketball.

**JIM WOLFER** (High School Business Teacher) – Mr. Wolfer lives in Fillmore. He attained his Education degree from SUNY Oneonta. He and his wife Jen have three sons—Lucas (age 24), Colby (20) and Marcus (17). He has been a basketball coach at Fillmore High School. His hobbies include martial arts and outdoor activities (hiking, hunting, kayaking).



**ALLISON GILBERT**

**ALLISON GILBERT** (Guidance Counselor at Pioneer High School) – Ms. Gilbert (Class of 2012) joins the Guidance Department after having been a secretary in the Pioneer High School office since 2021. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Elmira College, and is working on her Masters of School Counseling from St. Bonaventure University. A junior varsity coach in the Pioneer Field Hockey program, Ms. Gilbert said she is “excited to give back to the community. It’s a full circle moment for me, to have been a student and now a counselor here.”

**ASHLEY BURANDT** (Grade 3 Teacher at Arcade) – East Aurora native Ashley Burandt resides in Holland with husband Chris and daughters Amelia (age 5) and Mealla (3). She did her undergrad studies at SUNY Fredonia and her graduate work at Medaille College. A former employee of Williams Memorial Elementary School in South Carolina, Mrs. Burandt also worked locally at East Aurora and Franklinville schools. “I love Pioneer’s many opportunities for continued

professional growth and am very interested in social-emotional learning, psychology, and child development,” she said. In her spare time she likes to read, write, sing, dance, and find different ways to be creative. Mrs. Burandt is in training to be a certified parenting coach.



**MORGAN BROUSE**

**MORGAN BROUSE** (Grade 3 Teacher at Arcade) – Morgan Brouse of Chaffee (Pioneer class of 2019) is continuing with a classroom of her own after having been a long-term teacher substitute. She attended SUNY Fredonia, studying Early Childhood and Childhood Education. She said she looks forward to “working in my hometown with my previous teachers.”

**GEORGE KLINE** (UPK Physical Education/Substitute) – Mr. Kline is from West Seneca and attended Medaille College, where he earned a bachelors degree in Psychology and a masters degree in Elementary Education. He previously worked in the West Seneca School District and Buffalo Commons Charter School. He calls Pioneer “a great district with a very supportive staff.” Mr. Kline’s interests include basketball, football and track. His sister is...



**KAILEY KLINE**

**KAILEY KLINE** (Grade 3 Teacher at Arcade) – Ms. Kline is a West Seneca native who studied Early Childhood/Childhood Education at Medaille College and is currently attending SUNY Fredonia for her graduate program. She did student teaching in the West Seneca and Alden school districts. Ms. Kline said she is becoming familiar with Pioneer’s supportive and welcoming community, and is getting to know her students as well. She enjoys playing sports, watching the Bills, and spending time with family and friends. A fun fact about Ms. Kline is that she and her family were on TV’s Family Feud in 2021.

**ERIN BROTKA** (Long-Term Substitute in French) – Mrs. Brotka has studied at SUNY Fredonia, Université Laval, and the University of Cincinnati, earning bachelors and masters degrees in Communication. She and her husband Patrick live in Arcade, and their children are Benjamin, Gabrielle, Jonah and Abigail. She has been a substitute in various school districts, has taught Public Speaking, and has led 12-step programs. Mrs. Brotka enjoys reading, hiking and traveling, and came from a military family that “moved around a bit.” She said she is pleased to be at Pioneer.



**MORGAN LEVEA**

**MORGAN LEVEA** (Integrated Co-Teaching, Grade 2) – Ms. Levea is a new graduate of the Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio and is a native of Clarence. She holds a bachelors of science degree in Education and is licensed in Elementary

and Special Education. She also has had extensive experience in providing respite care to families of students with autism. Ms. Levea said she is excited to be part of Pioneer's close-knit, rural community. An animal lover, she trained dogs as a member of 4-H from Grade 8 forward, and has a dog and bunny. She is also active in her church, St. Gregory's in Williamsville.

**MELISSA GIRDLESTONE** (Business & Computer Teacher at Pioneer Middle School) – Mrs. Girdlestone ('05) is a proud Pioneer grad and a cancer survivor. She can often be found working out at 4:45 a.m., and enjoys camping with her family. She resides in Delevan with husband Steven and children Isabella (age 11) and Madeleine (9). Mrs. Girdlestone attended Buffalo State, and graduated with a bachelors degree in Business Administration (Management) and a masters degree in Career

and Technical Education. Her resume includes stints with Hamburg High School, Orleans-Niagara BOCES, and Attica High School.



**KALENE SIECKMANN**

**KALENE SIECKMANN** (Speech - Language Pathologist) – Mrs. Sieckmann is a Jamestown native now living in West Seneca with husband Alex and children Cohen (age 3) and Callie (1-1/2). She studied Communications Disorders and Sciences and Early Childhood/Childhood Education at SUNY Fredonia. She has worked in education at Early Intervention, Summit Center, Wee Can Preschool,

and C-A BOCES. She said she has seen many friendly faces in her short time at Pioneer, and looks forward to applying her experience in a wide range of communications disorders, including stuttering, augmentative and alternative communication, articulation disorders, receptive/expressive disorders, behavioral needs, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, and autism.



**KARI MAROWSKI**

**KARI MAROWSKI** (Special Education – Grade 4) – Ms. Marowski is a Pioneer graduate and resides in Delevan with son Jesse (age 8 months)

and partner Paul Kellogg. She said she is excited to be working in an Integrated Co-Teaching classroom. She attended SUNY Fredonia, with a bachelors degree in Child Education and a masters degree in Exceptional Education. In her spare time, Ms. Marowski enjoys camping and spending time with friends and family.

**LYNDA CROFT** (Special Education – Grade 4) – Ms. Croft will be part of an Integrated Co-Teaching classroom, having previously worked in Erie I BOCES' summer school program. She was educated at SUNY Fredonia (undergraduate, Psychology) and Lemoyne College (graduate, Education and Special Education). She recently moved from Syracuse to East Aurora, where she and fiancé Josh have a puppy named Dolly. Ms. Croft played soccer in college and is a fan of the Buffalo Bills.

## HIGH SCHOOL CHAMBER CHOIR WOWS DARIEN LAKE CROWD



*The Pioneer High School Chamber Choir opened a summer concert at Darien Lake.*

The Pioneer High School Chamber Choir performed this summer at Darien Lake Performing Arts Center.

The group were asked to open for classic rock bands Loverboy and Foreigner and received an incredible Bose sound system as a thank-you gift. The students performed a medley of rock songs arranged by Vocal Music teacher Victoria Tomasulo, their director, and did an incredible job.

If you would like to come hear that arrangement in person, the chorus will be recreating their performance live at their first concert on Wednesday, November 8, at 6:30 p.m., in the Pioneer High School Auditorium.

Thank you to all community members who went to the Darien Lake concert to support the kids. It means everything to them!

# PIONEER FFA CAPPED OFF A BUSY SUMMER



The Pioneer FFA Chapter is advised by Ag teachers Jonathan Clayson, Rachael Clayson and Justin Baker. The group had another busy summer in 2023.

**CAMP OSWEGATCHIE** - One of Pioneer's favorite summer activities is to attend the New York State FFA Camp, Camp Oswegatchie, in the Adirondacks. Twenty-four students attended. There is a week full of activities with students participating in horseback riding, hiking, gaga ball, high and low ropes course and kayaking. Campers are able to make

friends with students from all over New York whom they will probably see again at another FFA activity.

**WYOMING COUNTY FAIR** - Members also participated in the Wyoming County Fair. The theme for the fair was "Blue Jeans and Country Dreams." Members created a fair booth that showed how jeans and the FFA jackets are made. It also displayed the dreams and hard work of our members throughout the year.

FFA members also competed in Dairy Judging and Leadsman, Small

Engines, Tool Identification, Electricity, Stockman's, Small Animals, Agronomy, Tree Identification, and Horticulture contests. They had much success and left with multiple trophies and ribbons. Our trophy sponsors this year were Larry Romance and Son, Freedom Tire, Growmark FS, Edelweiss Dairy, and Western New York Crop Management. Thank you for recognizing our students' achievements.

**OTHER COMPETITIONS:** Several students competed in Welding and Tractor Driving contests held at the Genesee County Fair and SUNY Morrisville. Congratulations to Michael Jewert for placing second in Welding and third in Tractor Driving at Genesee County Fair, and tenth in both at the state level. Congratulations to Adam Romance for placing sixth in Welding at the state level. Together as a team they placed third overall in Welding.



# ARCADE ELEMENTARY STUDENT COUNCIL UPDATE

Arcade Elementary Student Council has announced its 2023-24 lineup and days to remember for the coming school year.

**STUDENT COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**STUDENT NAME**

- Vivian Smith
- Sydney Beechler
- Andie Budney
- Jonah Lehman
- Audrey Russel
- Neal Reagan

**STUDENT NAMES**

- Maggie Grundtich
- Penny Moore
- Ivy Morales
- Carter Martina
- Riley Ellis
- Quinn Welstead

**2023 to 2024**

**October 2023**

- Wednesday 10/11**  
Wear your Pioneer gear.
- Friday 10/13**  
Wear PINK.
- Tuesday 10/31**  
Halloween Day, bring your costume in for the day.

## SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION WEEK October 16-20, 2023

The New York State School Boards Association recognizes October 16-20 as School Board Recognition Week. This is a time to promote awareness and understanding of the important work performed by local school boards, including Pioneer School District.

Public schools form the bedrock of our communities and our country. Democracy thrives with educated citizens capable of critical thinking and civil discourse. And it is our local school boards who are ultimately responsible for student success.

“It takes strong schools to build a strong community, and these men and women devote countless hours to making sure our schools are helping every child learn at a higher level,” Pioneer Superintendent Nicholas Silvaroli said. “They make the tough decisions every month and spend many hours studying education issues and regulations in order to provide the kind of accountability our community stakeholders expect.”

Mr. Silvaroli said the key work of school boards is to raise student achievement by:

- Developing a shared vision and goals for the district
- Ensuring strategies, resources, policies and programs align with district goals
- Assessing and providing accountability for student achievement
- Supporting a healthy school district culture in which to work and learn
- Evaluating the superintendent to ensure continuous improvement
- And much more!

The members serving the Pioneer School District are: Melissa Nocera-Collins (president), Angela Wiseman (vice president), Darla Schwab, Denise Urbino, Wendy Burch, Shawn Hannon, Mark Kless, Eric Slocum and Brandon Pyc.



## Supporting Success for ALL Students

THANK YOU SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS!

**School Board Recognition Week**

October 16-20, 2023



New York State School Boards Association



## **New name, same mission: Pioneer's Family Support Counseling Corner**

Embark on a brand new academic year with the Pioneer Family Support Center! Formerly known as the Center for Positive Solutions, we are excited to introduce ourselves as your dedicated partners in mental health and well-being.

Meet our experienced team: Sheri Bell-Beyer, LCSW, and Angela Mason, LCSW. As licensed clinical social workers, we are passionately committed to providing exceptional individual and family therapy services to students and families throughout the Pioneer school district. The best part? Our services and unwavering support are free to students and their families who are enrolled in the Pioneer school district.

In future newsletters, look for the Counseling Corner, as we will offer mental health suggestions and information that could assist students and families to make their lives healthier and relationships stronger.

We eagerly anticipate a year filled with growth, healing, and positive transformation. Feel free to connect with us for any inquiries or to schedule your appointment. Angela can be reached at 716-492-9485, while Sheri is available at 716-492-9383.

**Welcome to the Pioneer Family Support Center, where your well-being is our top priority. We look forward to meeting and working with you. Here's to an exceptional year ahead!**

# Pioneer Music Department Performances

All performances will be in the high school auditorium unless noted otherwise.

- Thu. November 2 7/8 Band, Chorus, Orchestra 6:30  
Wed. November 8 H.S. Orchestra and Choirs 6:30  
Tues. November 14 Jazz Band, Concert Band, Wind Ensemble 6:30  
Wed. November 15 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Band and Orchestra 6:30  
Thu. November 16 High School Play Location Academic Hall  
Fri. November 17 High School Play Location Academic Hall  
Sat. November 18 High School Play Location Academic Hall
- Wed. December 6 Arcade Elementary Chorus 6:30 Arcade Aud.  
Thu. December 7 All Band Concert (grades 6-12)  
Wed. December 13 Delevan Elementary Chorus 6:30 Delevan Aud.  
Wed. December 20 All Choral Concert 6:30 PM
- Thu. January 11 5<sup>th</sup> grade Band and 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade Orchestras 6:30
- Wed. March 6 High School Musical 4:00 PM Senior Citizen Performance  
Fri. March 8 High School Musical 7:00 PM  
Sat. March 9 High School Musical 2:00PM and 7:00 PM  
Sun. March 10 High School Musical 2:00 PM  
Wed. March 13 7/8 Band, Chorus, Orchestra, Jazz Band 6:30  
Wed. March 20 High School Choirs, High School Orchestra 6:30  
Tues. March 26 High School Band and Wind Ensemble 6:30
- Tues. April 23 5/6 Chorus, 5 Band, 6 Band, 5 Orchestra, 6 Orchestra 6:30
- Wed. May 8 Arcade Elementary Chorus 6:30 Arcade Aud.  
Thu. May 16 High School Concert Band and Wind Ensemble 6:30 PM  
Wed. May 22 High School Choir 6:30  
Fri. May 31 Delevan Elementary Chorus 5:30 Delevan Aud.
- Thu. June 6 High School Year End Concert 6:30 PM

*"Life without playing music is inconceivable for me. I live my daydreams in music. I see my life in terms of music ... I get most joy in life out of music."  
- Albert Einstein*

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Melissa Nocera-Collins, President  
Angela Wiseman, Vice President  
Darla Schwab, Denise Urbino,  
Wendy Burch, Mark Kless, Shawn Hannon, Brandon Pyc, and Eric Slocum

**CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION**

Nicholas Silvaroli, Superintendent of Schools  
Anthony Montoro, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations  
Shawna Gugino, Assistant Superintendent of Academic Services  
William Weidner, Director of Athletics  
Jean Vallance, Director of Special Education  
Joseph Cappadonia, Acting High School Principal  
Richard Spinelli, Acting Middle School Principal  
Kerry Slocum, Arcade Elementary Principal  
Matthew Langworthy, Delevan Elementary Principal

**ECRWSS Postal Patron**  
*or Current Resident*

# IT'S GREAT TO BE BACK!

One Pioneer High School classroom is showing its zest for 2023-24. Helping their students reach for the stars are (from left): Mrs. Julie Smith-Frazier, Miss Mariah Owens, Ms. Kathleen Cook, Mrs. Keri O'Connell, Miss Larissa Falcone and Mrs. Jessica Barrett. They are 'back' to school ready!

