



ATTICA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

UPDATE

Winter 2024



AR SANDBOX HELPING STUDENT TACKLE TOUGH CONCEPTS

A powerful new instructional tool is changing the way Jenna Linsey teaches key, geographic and geologic concepts to her high school Earth science students.

Linsey recently began incorporating an augmented reality sandbox into lessons on topography, hydrology and mapping.

The device, which Linsey became familiar with when she was at SUNY Geneseo, consists of a walled table filled with sand, with an Xbox Kinect sensor and projector mounted above on a pair of metal arms. The Kinect sensor feeds data on the elevation of sand in the table below into free software developed at the University of California, Davis. The software

then spits out a contour elevation map, which the projector overlays on top of the sand below.

Students can arrange the sand into whatever configuration they want - a low valley, a high peak or some combination of the two - and the AR sandbox will spit out a near-perfect map in real time, complete with correctly-spaced contour lines and colors that correspond to certain elevation ranges relative to sea level.

To this point, Linsey's used the device primarily during lessons on mapping as she finds it helps students make connections between contour lines on a piece of paper - which can be more than a little abstract - and physically present features in the sand that they can touch and manipulate in real time.

"To me, I think it's worthwhile not only because of the educational aspect but also because it's just intriguing them," said Linsey. "They're

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Scan the QR code using the camera app on your smartphone to watch Jenna Linsey give a demonstration of her Augmented Reality Sandbox.



like 'What is this thing in the back of the classroom? This is really cool.'"

In addition to lessons on mapping, Linsey's also used the sandbox as a demonstrative tool when teaching students about sea level rise.

"I've had them build an island or coastline and I have toys and I'll have them build a community and I'll be like 'OK, what's going to happen to that town if sea level rises by a foot or two feet or seven feet,'" she said. "I think you could totally use it for a lesson on source point pollution too because it's really good at showing where water will flow given certain geographic features and elevations."

A years-long effort

For years, Linsey borrowed a similar AR sandbox from Scott Giorgis, one of her old professors at SUNY Geneseo.

"He would completely dismantle it at Geneseo and then show up and set it up for me but I felt bad - it was a lot of work," she said. "Eventually, I just decided to build one myself so he didn't have to keep lugging it around."

But building a device of her own was easier said than done.

"It took forever to build," said Linsey, who credited the help she received from her husband and fellow Attica faculty and staff with bringing the project through to fruition. "COVID was a big hiccup both in getting the materials we needed and then just being able to get people together to work on it. Honestly, I feel like it took five years. Not sure if that's exactly accurate, but that's what it feels like."

Attica alumnus Robbie Brunner (2004) donated the Kinect sensor. Middle School Technology Teacher John Versage built the sand table.

Linsey's husband, Brad (Attica Class of 2003), welded the metal arms that hold the Kinect sensor and projector in place and Craig Lavis, a technology assistant at Attica, helped install and set up software needed to make the device operate.

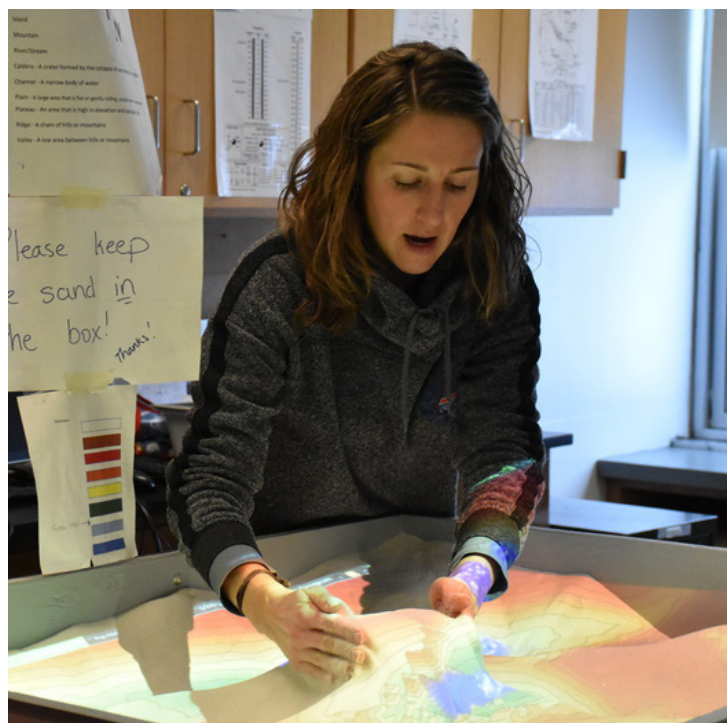
Such devices usually start around \$9,000 at any school science supply company, but Linsey's homemade model clocked in right around \$2,000.

Linsey acknowledged that the device still has a few bugs left to work out. Ideally, the projector would be mounted next to the Kinect sensor directly above the table, instead of off to the side where it currently is.

"Right now, when students make a particularly high feature like a mountain, it doesn't project on the back side of it because it's situated too low," Linsey explained. "The mountain casts a shadow."

Alison Zybczynski, Linsey's fellow earth science teacher at Attica High School, has also been using the sandbox during lessons. But once Linsey smooths out the sandbox's remaining wrinkles, she wants to make it available to other Attica teachers.

"I would love to get it down to the Elementary School for Sarah Stenson's STEAM class," she said. "We really just got this thing working last year so I want to make sure I'm comfortable using it and telling someone else how to operate it before offering it up."



FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK



I was taking a walk with my wife and girls earlier this month when Kinsley, my youngest, paused mid-stride and pointed excitedly at a patch of crocuses pushing up through the mud.

Bending over to get a better look, she remarked how happy she was that the flowers had finally decided to sprout and how pleased she was to see those delicate, purple petals after such a long, drab winter.

Her words got me thinking as we turned and headed for home.

The four of us were bundled up in heavy coats as late winter wind swirled old, wet leaves and whipped through bare, brown tree limbs but here along this unremarkable stretch of sidewalk, a vibrant, purple flower had decided to take root.

After months spent gathering strength and nourishment beneath the soil, here it was, unperturbed by the harsh conditions around it, unbothered by the next day's forecast, entirely confident in its decision to thrust up through the snow and open its petals to the light.

I see the course of progress generally, and education specifically, in much the same way.

At first, a new concept may seem foreign and the task of understanding it too daunting. We can work and work and work - all without the benefit of any discernible improvement - until one day, there it is: A delicate green shoot peeking out from beneath the dark earth, the proof of our past efforts.

It's so easy to become discouraged, frustrated by our lack of forward motion. But in the history of things that now work, it's important to remember there was a time when they did not.

Our own personal journeys may languish for weeks, months or even years without much progress until suddenly, we jolt forward and, looking back, wonder how we ever doubted ourselves.

And while there are no true shortcuts to progress, there's no denying the invaluable role teachers play in helping students consider new perspectives, master new skills and appreciate the value of becoming lifelong learners.

Teachers help shape not only their students' academic knowledge but also their character and outlook on life. Beyond the classroom, they serve as mentors, guides and champions for their students' growth and success.

Through their passion for teaching and genuine care for their students, teachers inspire a love for learning, instill curiosity and thirst for knowledge that can extend far beyond the confines of a textbook or the walls of a school.

We're lucky here at Attica to have teachers and staff that give so much of themselves to their students and students who are receptive to their efforts.

As we leave winter behind and look forward to spring, I'm excited at the prospect of growth - in our students, teachers and school community - and won't be surprised in the slightest if, on my way into work one morning, I pass by a cluster of purple crocuses that have decided the time is ripe to push up through the earth and take their place in the sun.

As ever, thank you for your ongoing commitment and dedication to our district.

Sincerely,
Kiel Illg, Ph.D.

Superintendent of Schools

SAVE THE DATE!

We're excited to announce our 2024 Capital Project.

District residents will vote on this \$21.07 million proposal on May 21, the same day as our annual School Budget Vote and Board of Education election.

This capital project proposal would include health and safety upgrades, address building maintenance items and improve educational offerings for our students across our three school buildings.

If approved by voters, this capital would have NO IMPACT on residents' school tax rate.

Scan the QR code to visit the 'Capital Project 2024' section of our website.

Here, you'll find the latest information about our project including an explanation of our planning process, important dates and artist's renderings and architectural plans of proposed design elements.



SCAN ME

BOARD MEMBER SHARES PASSION FOR **BEES** WITH STUDENTS

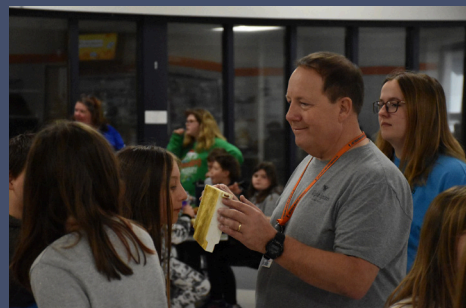
You probably know Thane Wright best as vice president of our board of education, but did you know he's also a professional apiarist?

That's right! Mr. Wright has operated his own beekeeping business, Wright Apiaries, for many years and earlier this school year, he stopped by our cafeteria to speak with middle and high school students about what the job entails.

Wright brought along a selection of his beekeeping equipment to show to students and honey sticks for them to try.

Mr. Wright has been a strong supporter of our agricultural programming over the years and, through his work on our cafeteria committee, has helped lead the way toward improving and expanding the food offerings our students have access to here at Attica Central Schools.

Thank you, Mr. Wright, for stopping by (and for the free honey sticks... yum)!



FASTER, HIGHER, STRONGER Elementary schoolers competing in Attica Olympics

The Attica Elementary Olympics are in full swing down on Prospect Street!

Elementary school teachers and staff came up with the idea of doing an olympics competition as a way to get our students excited about engaging in positive behaviors.

We have four teams competing, each consisting of one kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grade classroom.

Teams earn medals for completing an act that aligns with a positive character trait for that month. At the end of the school year, the team with the most medals will be declared the winner!

For our February character trait, kindness, the Red Team, which consists of Mrs. Hertel's, Mrs. Fagan's, Mrs. Calkins', Miss Kocher's, and Mrs. Kennedy's classes, showed kindness by visiting other classrooms to share kind words and compliments while Miss Alyssa Allein's and Mrs. Cheryl Allein's third grade classes "honked for kindness" on Prospect Street.

Great job to all our teams on showing kindness!

Scan the QR code to watch a video recap of all the fantastic ways our Attica Elementary Olympics teams showed kindness throughout the month of February!



 **SCAN ME**



ATTICA MATHLETES SWEEP MIDDLE, HIGH SCHOOL COMPETITIONS



Our 7th/8th grade and high school math teams won matching mathletics titles last month!

Our 7th/8th grade team, led by head coach Adam Landphair, wrapped up its season by beating out 8 other schools to capture the mathletics title for the 6th straight year!

Team members this season were: Ilyssa George, Jack Cusmano, Noah Sabatino, Mason Pappalardo, Emmett Vincin, Grant Nixon, William Franz, Luke Janus, Will Gouinlock, JJ Pearl and Wyatt Furr.



A few days later, our high school A team led by coach Will Paddock took second place at their final competition at Genesee Community College, which pushed them into first place for the season.

Senior Cash Domes and freshman Josh Kipfer were the top scorers of their grade level in the entire region and qualified for the state mathletics competition along with Mitchell Spink.

Congratulations, mathletes!

ATTICA CAPTURES SCHOLASTIC BOWL TITLE

Our mathletes weren't the only ones to earn some hardware in February - our Scholastic Bowl team also brought home a title!

The Blue Devils were the underdogs in the general trivia competition finals, taking on the top two seeds, Pembroke and Oakfield-Alabama.

But when time expired, it was Attica on top with 230 points to Pembroke's 220 and Oakfield-Alabama's 200!

Competing in the finals for Attica were juniors Emily Peters and Julia Wise and freshmen Noah Robinson and Michael Minter.

Other team members this season were Kate Metzger, Kim Piorun, Sam Dunlap, Boden Spink and Blake Donohue. The head coach was Jocelyn Pierce.



Photos courtesy of Lyndsay Herkimer

FIFTH GRADERS SHINE AT ODYSSEY OF THE MIND



Photos courtesy of Stacey Donahue



Caden Morrison, Claira Deuel, Erin Murphy and Amara Brinkman were shining stars at the Region 15 Odyssey of the Mind Regional Competition earlier this month at Mount Morris.

Starting in October, the four teammates along with Selena Barrios, who was unable to attend Regionals, have been meeting to come up with a solution to their chosen, long-term problem, which tasked teams with creating a performance about a touring rock band that is suddenly transported to an unexpected location in the middle of a song and have to figure out how to use music to get back to their tour.

To meet this prompt, our fifth graders wrote two songs and a skit, designed instruments, scenery, band merchandise and created costumes, hairstyles and makeup that tied everything together.

They also practiced scenarios for the spontaneous portion of the competition (as much as they could for something that they would have no prior knowledge of).



All those months of hard work paid off at Regionals as our team earned a near-perfect score of 347 out of 350. With the score, our team earned the Problem 5 Division I title and qualified for the New York State Finals in Syracuse April 13.

"This team gave up countless lunches, advisements and study halls and stayed after school several times per week, including some Fridays and one Saturday," said Odyssey Coach and Middle School Library Media Specialist Stacey Donahue. "They worked at home every night to memorize lines and lyrics and put their singing voices to work. I'm so proud of what they've achieved and can't wait for them to show what they can do at state finals!"

FUTURE METEOROLOGISTS?

Our fourth graders have been working hard researching national parks and weather phenomena as part of their most recent units in social studies and science.

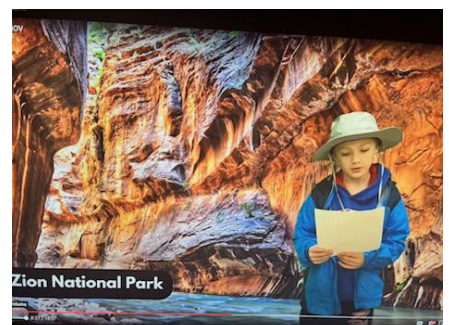
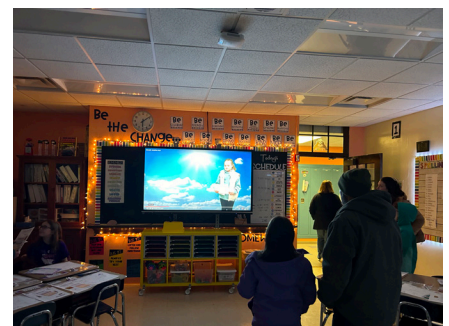


Students then drew on both areas of knowledge to create a weather report for their chosen park and, in collaboration with Genesee Valley BOCES, recorded that report using a camera and greenscreen.

Students presented their recorded reports during our Fourth Grade Family Night earlier this month - it was a huge success!

Students walked away with research and presentation skills after completing both units.

Way to go, fourth graders!



Photos courtesy of Katie Kennedy

ELF DAY SHENANIGANS

Elf and elf-ee alike had an absolute BLAST at our annual Elf Day before Winter Recess.

It was all kinds of mayhem in the high school library and our two gyms, but the good, making memories for a lifetime kind of mayhem.

Super proud of our seniors for making this such a special day for our kindergarteners!



Scan the QR code
for highlights from
our annual Elf Day
in December.



HONORING THEIR MEMORY

A handful of our students traveled to Washington D.C. in December to participate in Wreaths Across America Day, an annual observation where patriotic volunteers recognize the sacrifice of members of the U.S. Armed Forces by laying wreaths on their graves.



Scan the QR
code above for a
video from senior
Alanna Pellicane
recapping
students' trip
to Washington
D.C. for Wreaths
Across America.

WINTER SPORTS

BOYS BASKETBALL

Our varsity boys basketball team compiled a 16-4 regular season record before falling to Le Roy, 49-64, in the quarterfinal round of the Section V Class B2 Tournament.

Leading the way for the Blue Devils this year were seniors Cole Harding (16.4 ppg, 11.6 rpg), Jack Janes (16.1 ppg, 7.8 rpg), Clayton Bezon (13.9 ppg, 8.2 rpg) and junior Carter Gorski (10.9 ppg). This season marks the first time in school history four players have averaged in the double digits in scoring.

The season also saw Cole score the 1,000th point of his high school career during Attica's Feb. 14 win over Holley. Cole finished his high school basketball career with 1,019 points and sits in third place among Attica's all-time points leaders in boys basketball - one spot ahead of his coach, Genesee Region Coach of the Year winner Rob Crowley, who scored 969 points for the Blue Devils from 2003 to 2006.

Head Coach Rob Crowley was named Genesee Region Coach of the Year while Cole, Jack and Clayton were named Genesee Region All-Stars.



Photo courtesy of Brennan Bezon



Scan the QR code to see Cole Harding score the 1,000th point of his high school career.

BOYS INDOOR TRACK

Our boys indoor track team took 15th in the Rochester Winter Track League Championships and 11th in the Section V Class A3 Championships.

Top performers for the Blue Devils at sectionals were Taylor Zimmerman, who took third place in the shot put with a throw of 42 feet, 4 inches; Tim Lamparelli, who took fifth in the shot put (37 feet, 10.75 inches) and fourth in the weight throw (39 feet, 10.75 inches); and Jakk Chaplin, who took third in the weight throw (41 feet, 2.5 inches).

Taylor (shot put) represented Attica at State Qualifiers.



Photos courtesy of Luke George

WRESTLING

The combined Attica/Batavia wrestling team was extremely competitive again this year, with a 14-4 dual meet record heading into the postseason.

"We beat powerhouse HF-L in the Section V duals but lost in the finals to Pal-Mac who went on to states and placed 3rd," said Coach Lance Bannister. "Placing 2nd in Section V is tough as we have 42 small school wrestling programs we are competing against."

The team finished fourth in Class B1 at sectionals.

Preston Bannister took second at 116 lbs while Blake Donohue took second at 108 lbs. Tyler Baetzold took fourth at 285 lbs.

For the first time since 2005, an Attica/Batavia wrestler was a state champion as Casper Steward of Batavia won the 145 lb title. Casper, a senior, plans to wrestle at West Point next year.

Preston Bannister was named a Monroe County All-Star after winning every divisional match while Wyatt Bryman won his 100th career match competing at State Qualifiers.



Photo courtesy of Troy Colton

GIRLS SWIMMING

Our varsity girls swim team took second place in the Genesee Region this season and had 10 swimmers qualify for the Genesee Region-Niagara-Orleans Intersectional Swimming and Diving Championships - Brooke Luck, Kim Piorun, Claire Zehler, Leah Ford, Maddie Burger, Kate Metzger, Brielle Baker, Kara Hassenfratz, Samantha Alfiero and Makayla Kurtowicz.



Kim Piorun and Makayla Kurtowicz led the way at GRNOs. Kim took fifth in the 50-yard freestyle (27.10) and ninth in the 100-yard freestyle (1:03.21) while Makayla took sixth in the 200-yard freestyle (2:20.7).

Other top finishers for the Blue Devils at GRNOs were Kate Metzger, who took seventh in the 100-yard breaststroke (1:26.11) and Claire Zehler, who took eighth in the 50-free (28.54).

Kate Metzger, Kim Piorun and Makayla Kurtowicz were named Genesee Region All-Stars while Leah Ford, Brooke Luck, Samantha Alfiero and Claire Zehler earned honorable mention recognitions.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Our varsity girls basketball team finished 5-16 during an "up and down season," said Head Coach Lance Cayea, that was nevertheless marked by team members "always giving their best effort day in, and day out."

"This year's highlights included almost upsetting division champion Oakfield twice, losing by 1 point in the first meeting and 4 in the second contest," said Cayea. "Maddie Robinson led the team in scoring and rebounding."

Seniors were Maddie Robinson, Molly Gersitz, MacKenzie McLeod, Jaclyn Torrey and Elise Dressel.



Photos courtesy of Alanna Pellicane/Pellicane Photography



COMPETITIVE CHEERLEADING

Our varsity cheerleaders attended three competitions this season, taking first in their division at the Mercy PAWS Up Cheer Competition and Gates-Chili Spartan Showdown and second at the Caledonia-Mumford Grand Finale.

This year, Attica also hosted the Genesee Region Championships and took second in its division.

"We didn't do so well at sectionals this year. We placed 8th and we had some errors but we're going to build on our mistakes and next year come back stronger," said Head Coach Tori Wildey. "We also have four seniors leaving us this year - Skylar Hiam, Juliana Keicher, Kaitlyn Natalizia and Anna Torrey. I will truly miss them next season and wish them all the best!"



Varsity cheerleaders are pictured performing their routine at our Winter Pep Rally.



Varsity cheerleaders are pictured after their first place finish at the Gates-Chili Spartan Showdown.

Scan the QR code below to see Joe's prelims and finals races at states



Scan the QR code below to see Joe's Walk of Champions before heading to states.



BOYS SWIMMING

Our boys swim team took fifth place out of 13 competing schools at the Section V Class C Swimming and Diving Championships.

Leading the way for the Blue Devils at sectionals was Joe Parkhurst, who won and set new Class C records in the 50-yard freestyle (21.01) and 100-yard breaststroke (55.86). Sam Dunlap took third in the 200-yard freestyle (1:57.8) and 100-yard butterfly (59.94).

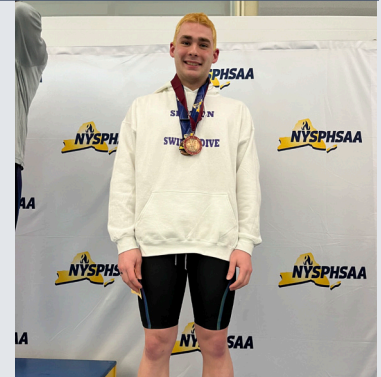
And, for the first time ever, the Blue Devils were champions in the 200-yard medley relay with the team of Joaren Anetrini, Joe Parkhurst, Sam Dunlap and Matthew Kingswell earning the patch with a time of 1:47.08.

At states, Joe took third place in the 50-free and fourth in the 100-yard breaststroke.

Joe and Sam were named Genesee Region All-Stars while Matthew, Joaren and Joe Tarapacki earned honorable mention recognitions.



Joaren Anetrini, Joe Parkhurst, Sam Dunlap and Matthew Kingswell pose for a photo with Head Coach Heather Smith after winning the Class C 200-yard medley relay.



Joe Parkhurst is pictured on the podium at states after his fourth place finish in the 100-yard breaststroke.



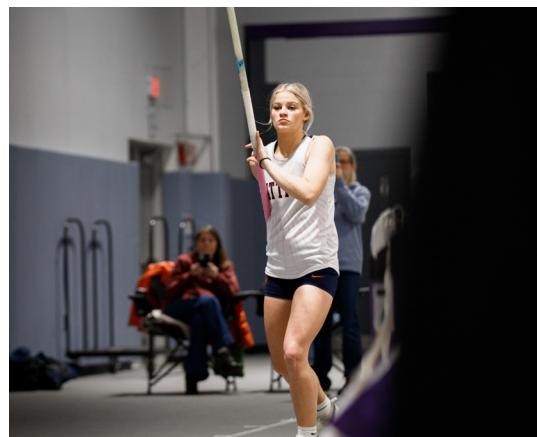
GIRLS INDOOR TRACK

Our girls indoor track team topped 27 other teams to capture the Rochester Winter Track League Division II Championship and took second at the Section V Class A3 Championship at Nazareth College, falling to first place finisher Midlakes by just 7 points.

Mackenzie McLeod captured the A3 title in the pole vault after clearing 9 feet, 3 inches.

Other top sectional finishers for Attica were Bailey Nixon, who took 2nd in the 1,000-meter run (3:14.72) and 3rd in the 1,500-meter run (5:28.35), Maddie Robinson, who took second in the shot put (31 feet, 6.25 inches) and third in the weight throw (32 feet, 7.5 inches) and Ellie Cusmano, who took 3rd in the 55-meter hurdles (9.79) and fourth in the triple jump (33 feet).

Mackenzie (pole vault), Bailey (1,000-meter run), Lauren Nelson (pole value) and Elizabeth Gouinlock (high jump) represented Attica at State Qualifiers.



HEARTBEAT OF ATTICA

PHOTOGRAPHY STUDENTS GET HANDS ON WITH 'VINTAGE' TECHNOLOGY

As we are now almost a quarter of the way into the 21st century, I think most people would agree we are becoming more and more removed from analog technology. Digital seems to have replaced most manual creative processes. While this may be considered a necessary evil, there is hope and benefits for still doing things the "old way."

Each year around springtime, our high school counselors are busy scheduling students for their courses the following year. Our high school art program is a strong one, offering eight different elective classes for students to enroll in, in addition to foundation level studio in art.

One of those electives is black and white film photography. In this course, students learn how to use an old-school 35mm film camera. Considered a lost art, Ms. Laura Steves is working hard to keep the technology alive at Attica. Students learn about the history of photography and how to take a well composed photo, develop film and use the dark room to print their own photographs.

They also understand that being able to persevere and problem solve are important skills to learn. With analog photography, sometimes things don't work out the way we want or expect. Figuring out what went wrong and honing in on the problem so it doesn't happen again is a big part of learning.

Ms. Steves always wants her students to persevere through the challenges they face.

"Art teaches us many things and sometimes that lesson is that things don't always turn out how we expect them," said Steves. "What matters is what we learn from that experience and how we can apply it in our lives."

As your high school student is thinking about classes for next year, instead of sitting in a study hall, have them consider choosing an elective class that is perhaps out of their comfort zone. Something that can challenge their capabilities and allow them to take some creative risks. They may just surprise themselves with what they can do!



MASKED READERS REVEALED



SCAN ME

National Read Across America Week ran from March 2 to March 6 and this year, Attica Elementary School decided to do something a little different.

Inspired by the hit, Fox reality show, "The Masked Singer," we decided to stage "The Masked Reader" as a way of getting our kiddos excited about reading!

Monday through Thursday, we shared a video of one of our Masked Readers reading a book aloud. These readers could be ANYONE - a teacher, a staff member, a coach - with a connection to our school!

Students watched these videos in class and then, during our monthly assembly Friday morning, they had a chance to guess readers' identities before they revealed themselves!

This was SO MUCH FUN.

Our kiddos had a great time guessing who our Masked Readers were throughout the week and were so excited for the big reveal Friday.



PEP RALLY-PALOOZA

High schoolers assembled in the gymnasium last month for our Winter Pep Rally.

Our freshmen, sophomore, junior and senior classes competed in the class cheer, a balloon relay, hungry hungry hippos, musical chairs and a pie eating contest before the ultimate event - a good old fashioned teacher pieing!



SCAN ME

Scan the QR code above for highlights from our Winter Pep Rally



EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM PAVES THE WAY FOR STUDENTS IN RENEWABLE ENERGY

By Lyndsay Herkimer

During his senior year at Attica Central High School, Nathan Sponaugle embarked on a transformative journey into the solar energy sector, facilitated by his participation in the Early College High School program. This program is a cornerstone for students aiming to secure a place in high-demand, well-compensated careers, particularly in emerging sectors. It is specifically tailored for students from school districts within the Genesee Valley BOCES region and fosters a pivotal partnership with Genesee Community College. This collaboration not only enables students to pursue a college degree while completing their high school education but also underscores the significance of integrating academic achievement with professional readiness.

The essence of Early College High School transcends the traditional educational paradigm by fostering robust partnerships between students and the business community, ensuring that learning is deeply intertwined with real-world business applications and workforce demands. The program offers a unique blend of experiential learning opportunities, from innovative workshops and talks by industry experts to hands-on mentorship in actual job environments.

By facilitating a no-cost avenue for students to achieve an associate's degree from GCC, the program directly bridges the gap between academic learning and career development. It emphasizes work-based learning experiences and the cultivation of meaningful relationships with business and industry leaders. Tailored to meet the varying ambitions and paces of its students, the program grants them the liberty to select their career paths, thereby opening a wide array of opportunities and fostering a dynamic connection between education and the evolving needs of the workforce.



Photo courtesy of Lyndsay Herkimer

From left, teacher Adam Wheeler, student Nathan Sponaugle and Shawn Grasby of Grasby Consulting are pictured during an on-site job shadowing experience.

Nathan's interest in renewable energy, particularly solar power, wasn't sparked by chance but by a deep curiosity about how solar energy works and its potential to transform societies. This interest led him to seek out a job shadowing opportunity at Grasby Consulting & EDF Renewables, a company renowned for its renewable energy production.

EDF Renewables specializes in developing and building solar projects that help to power communities and support a nationwide push towards cleaner energy sources. For Nathan, this was an unparalleled chance to see the theoretical knowledge he had acquired in the classroom come to life in the real world. It was here, amidst the hum of machinery and the bustling activity of construction sites, that his abstract interest in solar energy began to crystallize into a clear career aspiration.

On his first day shadowing, Nathan witnessed the initial stages of constructing a solar farm. He observed the precision with which holes were drilled and poles were planted, a testament to the meticulous planning and coordination required to bring such a project to fruition. The sight of supplies being delivered in a timely fashion highlighted the importance of logistics and project management skills in the solar industry. This hands-on experience provided Nathan with a tangible understanding of the complexities involved in solar farm construction.

What surprised Nathan the most during his shadowing experience was the broader impact of solar farms on local communities and economies. He learned that these projects do more than just generate clean energy; they also create jobs, stimulate economic growth, and can significantly increase local revenue. This realization added a new dimension to Nathan's interest in solar energy, emphasizing the importance of renewable energy projects in fostering sustainable development.

Observing the construction of one of the largest solar farms in New York State was a defining moment for Nathan. It emphasized the growing demand for solar energy and its potential to make a significant impact on the state's energy landscape. This experience taught him that the success of solar projects relies heavily on effective communication, teamwork, and the integration of cutting-edge technology.

Nathan was particularly impressed by the technological advancements he saw, such as GPS-equipped digging machines that ensured the precise placement of poles, and solar panels that automatically adjusted their position to track the sun. These innovations highlighted the industry's commitment to efficiency and sustainability, further fueling Nathan's passion for solar energy.

The environmental stewardship demonstrated by EDF Renewables also left a lasting impression on Nathan. He learned about the careful measures taken to preserve local ecosystems, such as protecting wetlands and conserving topsoil. This commitment to minimizing the environmental impact of solar farms resonated with Nathan, aligning with his own values of sustainability and conservation.

Through his job shadowing experience, Nathan saw firsthand how solar energy projects can benefit local communities, not just through the provision of clean energy but also by funneling resources into public services and education. This realization deepened his commitment to pursuing a career in the solar field, as he recognized the potential for renewable energy to contribute positively to society.

"It is important to Grasby Consulting to educate and help all students, including adults, to further their knowledge in renewable energy and all other job opportunities related to renewable energy," said Shawn Grasby, President of Grasby Consulting. "I feel this is important because the electrical need is so prevalent and growing quickly. As traditional power plants continue to shut down and the electricity needs become greater, this is the cleanest and fastest way for New York State to achieve its goals. By offering student services such as shadowing and in-person workshops, Grasby Consulting benefits the company and the students by educating the younger generation on future career paths and adults changing careers."

As Nathan looks to the future, he plans to build on the foundation of knowledge and experience he gained from his time with Grasby Consulting & EDF Renewables. He intends to complete a two-year degree in solar panel technician studies at GCC, after which he will decide whether to further his education or enter the workforce directly. Regardless of the path he chooses, Nathan is now equipped with a clear vision for his career in solar energy, driven by a passion for sustainability and a desire to make a tangible difference in the world.

The insights provided by Haylee Ferington, the Community Relations Manager at EDF Renewables, further enriched Nathan's understanding of the solar industry's future and the crucial role of education and community involvement in achieving sustainable energy goals. Ferington's emphasis on the importance of engaging young professionals like Nathan in the renewable energy workforce highlighted the dynamic and inclusive nature of the solar industry, offering diverse career paths and opportunities for economic development within local communities.

EDF Renewables is committed to fostering the next generation of renewable energy professionals by offering scholarships to high school students in local project areas, focusing on trades or renewable energy fields. They actively collaborate with local union chapters and educational programs to enhance awareness and knowledge about careers in solar energy. They believe that supporting educational partnerships and workforce development initiatives is crucial for achieving New York's clean energy objectives and for the responsible

development of renewable energy sources.

Grasby emphasized the importance of education and workforce development in the renewable energy sector. His advocacy for student shadowing programs and workshops reflects a commitment to nurturing the next generation of renewable energy professionals, ensuring that New York State can meet its clean energy goals amid increasing electrical demands.

Nathan's story, from his initial curiosity about solar energy to his immersive learning experience, is a testament to the transformative power of education and hands-on experience. It highlights the importance of following one's passions, the value of community and environmental stewardship, and the vast opportunities available in the renewable energy sector. As Nathan continues on his path, the insights and experiences he has gained will undoubtedly fuel his ambition to contribute to a sustainable and prosperous future through solar energy.



Photo courtesy of Lyndsay Herkimer

A view of one of EDF Renewables' solar array job sites in Mount Morris.

SPREADING POSITIVITY

Members of our High School Youth Empowerment Club recently made a Take What You Need Wall in one of our hallways!

The idea, said club member Alanna Pellicane, is to spread positivity to anyone who might need it.

"There are cards with different positive and inspiring messages on them," Alanna explained, "and students can take the one that applies to them. Students can then put them in their phone, lockers or chromebooks and have a positive message to glance at throughout the day whenever they need to."



Photo courtesy of Alanna Pellicane

'ARSENIC AND OLD LACE'

GRACES ATTICA STAGE

Members of our High School Drama Club staged the black comedy "Arsenic and Old Lace" earlier this month in our Performing Arts Center.

Our students really channeled the crazy in this uproarious farce featuring a pair of murderous spinsters, eminently incompetent police officers, a tenuous Teddy Roosevelt and one man's desperate attempts to maintain a shred of sanity amidst a tempest of maniacal misdeeds.

Now, can we offer anyone a glass of Elderberry wine?



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