



# REBEL ALLIANCE

ALTMAR-PARISH-WILLIAMSTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

FALL 2022

## APW Students Treated to a Concert of Positive Messages



*Singer/songwriter and school favorite Jared Campbell brings messages of positivity to APW students.*

Concluding an exceptional first month of school, APW Elementary students experienced a live musical concert from a well-loved school favorite: Jared Campbell.

On Sept. 30, Campbell, an award-winning singer/songwriter originally from upstate New York, delighted the students with a performance which focused on positive, uplifting messages.

Campbell's presence at APW Elementary has become a celebrated tradition, with a

visit from the musician typically beginning and ending each year. While performing some covers of well-known songs, his self-written works focus on themes like kindness, cooperation and respect. This year, Campbell encouraged APW students to "make history" while reminding them of the importance of being responsible to oneself.

The concert was made possible through the CiTi BOCES Arts-in-Education program.

## School Year Begins with Successful Stuff-A-Bus Event

Even before the new school year began, the school district's annual Stuff-A-Bus event was reaching out to support APW students.

On Aug. 29, hundreds of eager students and families visited the district bus garage to take part in the annual Stuff-A-Bus event. Participants could select one of hundreds of backpacks, each filled with essential school supplies. At no cost to families, the program has helped to ease financial concerns within the school community for the last 25 years.

"The best part of Stuff-A-Bus is the look on the kids' faces and their excitement when they get to come in and pick the backpack that they want," said Christy Metcalf, student-parent community liaison of the district and the co-coordinator of the event. Metcalf was proud to report that 242 backpacks were donated this year, the largest number donated in her 14 years of managing the project.

The majority of the supplies were donated by the United Way of Oswego and the district's PTSA. Private donations were made by Shelly and Earl Stone, Kim and Paul Ford, and Barb Certerski. Dozens of doughnuts for visiting participants were provided by Dunkin' Donuts in Parish.

Metcalf co-coordinates the event alongside Jessica Lyons, and was

further assisted by Mary Kinney, Rachael and Richelle Blankshain and her grandson, Brantley Fisher.

Even with the new school year well underway, Metcalf is already thinking about next year. "We look forward to the program," she said. "We want to continue to serve as many students in the district as possible. The benefits are indescribable."



*APW Elementary students pose after picking out their favorite backpacks during the Stuff-A-Bus program.*



*Students attending the Stuff-A-Bus program could select from hundreds of backpacks, each stuffed with essential school supplies.*

*Academics at its best • Pursuit of excellence • Where students come first.*

## A message from the APW Superintendent



Dr. Naomi Ryfun,  
Superintendent

### Dear APW Community,

Before students arrived, we began in August with new staff orientation, where we welcomed several new staff members. Later that month, we held two days of professional development for our staff district-wide. As an expression of appreciation, the second day included a luncheon for the staff and was hosted by

the APW Board of Education. Doors opened for students the following week, and now here we are already well into the 2022-2023 school year!

Moving forward, you will continue to hear about our Strategic Plan, which serves as the roadmap to the decision-making process here at APW. Our mission states, "Because we believe in the potential of each student, we provide diverse opportunities and a competitive education for all learners." The vision is that every learner will be prepared for their individual chosen path. We recognize that vision will take time, resources, and a strong commitment to our organizational beliefs and goals.

We hold several beliefs that drive our actions at APW. As a community, we believe that integrity must be the foundation for all we say and do. We believe that all students and staff can attain their individualized achievement goals with support. We believe that our interactions with one another should demonstrate care and compassion. We believe that as an organization and as individuals, continuous growth is essential for improvement. Most importantly, we believe that safety for all begins

with inclusive practices and welcoming spaces that create a sense of belonging.

Anchored to those beliefs are four goals, the first of which is to set high expectations for students and staff to ensure all students achieve personal excellence. The second goal is to achieve inclusion for all through continuous progress on equity. Engaging staff, parents, and communities to support student success is the third goal. Finally, our fourth goal is to build safe, positive, healthy climates for learning and working to nurture student and staff well-being.

These goals will help us focus our action planning for the next several years. We have identified several strategies aligned to our goals that will help to ensure we make decisions in the best interest of our students. Some of these strategies include the following: creating pre-K through 12 curriculum committees; using "I can" statements in all learning settings; establishing a system for students and staff to provide suggestions and feedback to administration; examining policies and practices to ensure they promote inclusion and belonging; developing a comprehensive plan for parent involvement and communication to promote positive relationships; and regularly assessing school climate.

We invite you to share your voice as we strive to continuously improve the student experience here at APW.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Naomi Ryfun  
APW Superintendent of Schools

## APW Holds Back-to-Back Open Houses

For the first time in two years, APW Elementary and APW JSHS were able to open their doors and host in-person open houses. Both gatherings were well-attended, inviting local families into the new academic year.

APW JSHS held its open house Oct. 5, greeting visitors with a host of informational tables from several school and community organizations. Parents were also invited to the auditorium to hear from Shane Ryan of the Jefferson County DARE program. Ryan spoke heavily on the dangers of drugs and vaping within the APW community and beyond.

The following evening, APW Elementary hosted an open house of its own. In partnership with Catholic Charities, the school sponsored a car seat safety check in the parking lot to all participating families. Inside, community organizations like the Girl Scouts hosted informational tables while the cafeteria offered a warm meal of pasta, salads and drinks.

"The hallways were full of excited students visiting classrooms, finding their artwork in the hallway and having dinner," said Elementary Principal Dawn Cooley. "This was a very nice way to start our school year."



APW Elementary students enjoy a delicious meal as part of the school's fall open house.



Junior high student Melody B. shows off her classwork during APW JSHS's first in-person open house in two years.

# First Day at APW Elementary

*It was a great day for a first day at APW!  
Let's have an amazing new school year!*



# A Letter from the School Board President

*Welcome back to the 2022-2023 APW school year!*



*Shawn Clark, President*

As I sit here writing this today, the leaves are falling outside, rain is coming down from the sky and there is a crispness in the air that lets me know that fall has arrived. It is also a reminder that we have begun the school year and things are in full swing. Students and staff had a successful first few

weeks of school of getting to know each other and continuing the learning process. Our athletic seasons are up and running and our athletes are doing a great job.

Our vision at APW is to have "Every learner prepared for their individual chosen path." What does that mean? It means that we understand that every learner is different, and we want to make sure that whatever path your child wishes to take in life that they are prepared for it when leaving APW. We are dedicated to making sure that we "offer diverse opportunities and a competitive education for all learners" as stated in our mission statement.

Each month on the fourth Thursday, the Board of Education has committee meetings that we encourage you to come out and be part of. These committees offer you an opportunity to give input into the following areas: Athletic Committee, ESA (Excellence in Student Achievement), Finance Committee (Budget Development), Long-Range Planning, and the Policy Committee. From these monthly meetings, recommendations are made to the full board to, once again, make sure every learner is prepared for their individual chosen path. I encourage you to come out to these meetings and be a part of the success that we are experiencing at APW.

I encourage you to be part of your child(ren)'s education. Whether advocating for them on a classroom level, cheering them on and being a good sportsman at an athletic event or drama production, joining in holiday festivities, or simply encouraging the people working with your children every day. We all have the same goal in mind: to prepare your children for the future while caring for them in the present.

***Have an amazing fall season and Go Rebels!***

Shawn Clark  
APW BOE President

## Pesticide Notification

Dear Parent, Guardian, and School Staff:

New York State Education Law Section 409-H requires all public and nonpublic elementary and secondary schools to provide written notification to all persons in parental relation, faculty, and staff regarding the potential use of pesticides periodically throughout the school year, on school property.

Schools must also advise parents and staff members that they have the right to ask to be informed 48 hours before the application of pesticides (with specific exceptions, as listed below) and that the APW Central School District is required to maintain a list of persons in parental relation, faculty, and staff who wish to receive 48-hour prior written notifications.

The following pesticide applications are not subject to prior notification requirements:

- a school remains unoccupied for a continuous 72-hours following an application;
- anti-microbial products;
- nonvolatile rodenticides in tamper resistant bait stations in areas inaccessible to children;
- nonvolatile insecticidal baits in tamper resistant bait stations in areas inaccessible to children;
- silica gels and other nonvolatile ready-to-use pastes, foams, or gels in areas inaccessible to children;
- boric acid and disodium octaborate tetrahydrate;
- the application of EPA designate=d biopesticides;
- the application of EPA designated exempt materials under 40CFR1 52.25;
- the use of aerosol products with a directed spray in containers of 18 fluid ounces or less when used to protect individuals from an imminent threat from stinging and biting insects including venomous spiders, bees, wasps, and hornets.

In the event of an emergency application necessary to protect against an imminent threat to human health, a good faith effort will be made to supply written notification to those on the 48-hour prior notification list.

If you would like to receive 48-hour prior notification of pesticide applications that are scheduled to occur in your school(s), please notify our pesticide representative. Mr. David Poore, Director of Facilities, APW School District, 641 County Route 22, PO Box 97, Parish, NY 13131. For further information on these requirements you may contact Mr. Poore at 315-625- 5245 or fax 315-625-5244.

## Annual Fire Inspection Notification

Notice is hereby given that the annual fire/safety inspection of the school buildings of the APW Central School District for fire hazards which might endanger the lives of students, teachers, and employees therein, has been completed and the report thereof is available at the district office of APW Central School District for inspection by all interested persons.

As a direct result of staff safety awareness and due to the constant, diligent attention given to safety concerns on a day-to-day basis, the fire/safety inspection report was excellent and the fire inspector was impressed with the outstanding condition of our buildings.

## SEL District Specialist Explains: What is Social-Emotional Learning?

Picture this: A class of 20 teens walk into their math class and within the first five minutes, the teacher and students are already emotionally overwhelmed. Some students are struggling to control their behavior, others are feeling anxious and not sure how to cope and still more students have invisible problems such as not having enough food to eat or being abused at home. The teacher, who had planned a fun math lesson to start the day, realizes that they do not have enough desks for their students to sit in and no one has their Chromebooks charged. Both the teacher and the students feel like their day has already hit an all-time low.

This is where SEL comes into place.

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process through which students and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitude and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

Our students experience many situations, feelings, people and emotions throughout their school week. Much of the time it's tough to deal with. Add on any homelife struggles and any of the issues in the greater world and it can be a whirlwind for anyone!

When an SEL culture is brought to a school successfully, students have significantly improved academics, higher attendance rates, lower chronic absenteeism, reductions in problem behaviors and an increase in positive interactions.

At APW, we're taking a district-wide approach. SEL isn't a designated subject like English or math, but it can be woven into a school's curriculum. When teachers make academic lessons more personable and relatable, students are more likely to participate in class rather than act up or mentally zone out.

In addition to already having a long and successful history implementing Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports, all students at APW Elementary School are now receiving weekly SEL explicit instruction from a program called Second Step. These lessons are taught weekly by academic teachers and are reinforced in all areas of the school. At the JSHS, we're working with academic teachers to help implement SEL benchmarks into existing core standards, helping students build character and academic knowledge at the same time.

I'm a firm believer that SEL is equally as important as academics are to our students' future success. The focus, as always, is connection, community, and relationships. Afterward, you can move over to the math assignment. It's so important to normalize emotions and give students creative ways to have an outlet as well as stay connected and successful.

**Hillary O'Hagan is APW's Social-Emotional Learning Specialist. Find more SEL resources at [hillaryscounselorscorner.com](http://hillaryscounselorscorner.com) and look for Wellness Wednesday video updates every month on Facebook and YouTube!**

## New Faces at APW

*There are a few new faces at APW! The 2022-2023 school year brings several new administrators to the team. We took a moment to catch up with two of them: Diane Bush and George Emrich.*



**GEORGE EMRICH**

*Director of Health, PE, and Athletics*

**What brings you to APW?**

I have 16 years of experience as an athletic director. I have worked at a small school and a big school. I prefer smaller schools. APW has a good

reputation and I believe the Athletic Department can grow and offer more opportunities to our students. I think it's going to be fun to be a part of that growth and I look forward to it!

**What are your responsibilities within your new administrative role?**

My responsibilities as Director of Health, PE, and Athletics include a variety of duties. I do everything from creating a budget for the department to scheduling games and enforcing the Code of Conduct. I keep track of inventory. I communicate league, section, state rules, and our local board of education policies to coaches. I also observe teachers and coaches.

**What are your interests/hobbies outside of your career?**

I enjoy fitness activities like running, biking, kayaking and golfing.

**What are you most looking forward to in working at APW?**

I am looking forward to seeing our programs improve and offer more opportunities to students. The district has allowed us to make some upgrades in the Fitness Center. I hope this new equipment will attract more students to the center and promote health and wellness. I'm hoping our athletic teams will see some dividends from this as well.

**What impact do you hope to have at APW?**

I hope that I will be able to help all the teachers and coaches be successful here so that ultimately the students will succeed in what they want to do. Some students walk away from school feeling that they are not prepared for the outside world. I hope that our students graduate and learn the life lessons that sports teach including perseverance, determination and teamwork. When they have these tools for life, they can apply them to any situation and be successful.



**DIANE BUSH**

*Director of Instructional Technology*

**What brings you to APW?**

When I was considering seeking my admin degree (more than seven years ago), I had a discussion with a close friend of mine about where we could see ourselves. I

had said, even back then, that I could see myself at APW because it's a small, close-knit community where I felt I could make a positive impact. When I finally enrolled in my degree program two years ago and finished it this past spring, I saw the position I'm currently in at APW advertised. I thought it was a bit of kismet and knew I had to apply. With my interest in technology and the school itself, it seemed the perfect fit.

**What are your responsibilities within your new administrative role?**

In my new position, I am responsible for working with my IT team to problem solve, vet and purchase new software and hardware, coordinate the delivery of instructional technology and training, oversee data reporting, and ensure cybersecurity and a strong, secure network. I assist teachers and staff with their technology needs and collaborate with the district's administration. I also lead a group of stakeholders to determine and fulfill our district's instructional technology needs and goals to support the district's mission, vision and strategic plan.

**What are your interests/hobbies outside of your career?**

Outside of work, I enjoy visiting and spending time with family and friends, traveling, walking, reading, and working on projects.

**What are you most looking forward to in working at APW?**

I'm looking forward to working with my team, building friendships, making a positive impact, helping students and staff, and working hard to make students' lives better.

**What impact do you hope to have at APW?**

I hope to be a valuable part of a team that moves APW forward so that each day is better than yesterday. I would like to know that I was part of positively impacting students' lives, serving others and making a difference.



## APW Conservation Club Shows Students the Wonder – and Importance – of the Natural World

The APW Conservation Club has already begun the new school year with a series of exciting projects and events that speak to their passion to build a better world.

On Oct. 4, Leo Rode and Ben Trowbridge of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo attended an APW Conservation Club meeting. Their purpose was to speak on animal enrichment – the idea of improving a captive animal's quality of life by providing them with new toys, challenges, and experiences.



Charley S., Jayden R., and Christina M. – all APW students and members of the Conservation Club – participate in a beach day cleanup to commemorate the 50th anniversary of NOAA's Marine Sanctuary department.

America. Hearing zoo staff describe their own efforts only furthered their interest in the topic.

Between discussions of sneakers designed specifically for elephants and the not-so-indestructible nature of toys for big cats, students were also able to interact with several of the zoo's smaller residents that Rode and Trowbridge had brought with them. A tenrec (a small, hedgehog-like animal native to Madagascar), a chuckwalla (a lizard native to the American Southwest), and a pair of Madagascar hissing cockroaches were all in attendance. Students even had the opportunity to design obstacle-filled mazes for the cockroaches who, despite their small brains, still benefit from the effects of enrichment.

In the four years of the club's existence, Halsey and her students have a lengthy

list of accomplishments. Educational experiences like these are a major part of APW's conservation club, but so are opportunities to give back. In August, the group celebrated the 50th birthday of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Marine Sanctuary Department with a series of beach cleanups at Chimney Bluffs, Fair Haven, Selkirk Shores, and Sandy Island. Here, they exceeded their goals and gathered up more than 55 pounds of trash.

In the past, the club has worked to donate to groups like Partners in Conservation, the Wolf Conservation Center, The Hawk Creek Wildlife Center and -- more locally -- Kindred Kingdoms of Pennellville, NY.

Actions like these helped to earn APW its status as an "Ocean Guardian School" for the second year in a row this September. The Ocean Guardians program – |run through NOAA – asks students to carry out conservation-minded activities, present research findings, and reach out to their communities on important issues. APW students focused their own efforts on the dangers of single use plastics and their threat to the environment. The banner awarded by NOAA hangs proudly outside of Halsey's classroom.

Throughout the year, APW's budding conservationists will continue to work toward building better relationships with the natural world and the many species that share it.

The club meets every Tuesday in Ms. Halsey's classroom.



APW Conservation Club members work with staff from the Rosamond Gifford Zoo to design an enrichment space for a Madagascar hissing cockroach.

## Big Changes Coming for APW Schools and Facilities



APW Central School District facilities continue to progress with several new phases of capital improvement projects.

In July, district administrators submitted their Phase 1 plan to the NYS Education Department for approval. Improvements include a variety of updates to the district's bus garage — including roof replacement, mechanical improvements and pavement — as well as a number of important changes to the JSHS facilities. Plans call for a new roof, kitchen upgrades,

IT area updates, and HVAC replacement at the JSHS. Once accepted, bids for contractors should be sent out and awarded by the end of the year, with construction projected to start sometime in 2023.

Phase 2 of the project is on track to be sent to NYSED this December. This phase calls for additional changes to the JSHS, including door and window modifications, major renovations of the second floor classroom wing, and sizeable trade center improvements. The most notable work targets the music and choral classrooms while expanding the auditorium's capacity to 690 seats.

"Plans are underway to discuss the impacts to staff, students and classrooms as we look to renovate the instructional technology suite and the seventh

and eighth grade hallway of classrooms," said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Naomi Ryfun.

The district is also excited to have purchased five sets of new classroom furniture, set to arrive this November. Once in place, these sets will serve as test samples with the hope of replacing furniture in all classrooms over the next several years.

Phase 3 of the capital improvement project more directly targets the elementary building, though anticipated submission to NYSED is planned for winter 2023. Construction is unlikely to begin before 2024.

The \$37 million project was approved by district residents in a vote Dec. 7, 2021, and is anticipated to be fully covered through existing funding streams.

# Pep Rally at APW JSHS

*APW Rebels have spirit! Check out these photos from our Homecoming Pep Rally!*



# REBEL ALLIANCE



Altmar-Parish-Williamstown

Central School District

District Office

Post Office Box 97

Parish, NY 13131

315-625-5251

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

NON-PROFIT ORG.

ECRWSS

US Postage Paid

Permit Number 9

Parish, NY 13131

POST OFFICE BOXHOLDER  
OR RURAL ROUTE PATRON

*Academics at its best • Pursuit of excellence • Where students come first*

For Important Announcements, Annual Notifications, Events, Contact Information and other information,  
visit the APW District website at [www.APWSchools.org](http://www.APWSchools.org)

## SENIOR CITIZEN THANKSGIVING DINNER



Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup>



5:00 p.m.



JSHS dining room

*Event is free and hosted by the HS student Government.*

# FOLLOW US!



@APWCSD



@apwrebels



@apw\_rebels



APW CSD

WHERE THE  
GOLDEN SUNSET  
MELLOW  
TINTS THE  
WESTERN SKY,  
PROUDLY STANDS  
OUR ALMA MATER  
A.P.W. HIGH.  
SING THE CHORUS.  
LIFT IT UPWARD  
IN HER PRAISES VIE.  
HAIL TO THEE,  
OUR ALMA MATER,  
A.P.W. HIGH

The APW Central School District in accordance with the Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and does not discriminate on the basis of sex or handicap in the educational programs or activities it operates. This includes recruitment and employment of employees; pay and benefits; counseling services for students; access by students to educational programs, courses and activities. The District's Title IX Compliance Coordinators are Jennifer O'Malley (639 Co. Rt. 22, Parish, NY 13131; 315-625-5222) and Crystal Reynolds (639 Co. Rt. 22, Parish, NY 13131; 315-625-5260).