



A look at activities in the Eldred Central School District

SCHOOL

A Special Supplement to the Sullivan County Democrat

SCENE



What's new at Mackenzie Elementary?

STORY AND PHOTOS
BY PATRICIO ROBAYO

Michael Carpentieri, Principal at George Ross Mackenzie Elementary School, says a lot is going on this year.

With passion and pride, Carpentieri, now in his second year as Principal, says he loves his role and applauds the outstanding work of his devoted staff.

"I have a staff that cares so much about kids and always puts them first; we have great kids. It's just been wonderful," said Carpentieri.

One of the changes that parents and guardians will see this year is how elementary school students are graded in their report cards.

The elementary school will now have a standards-based report card with the mission of "Every Eldred student can and will learn to their full potential."

So what's different? One difference is that students will receive three report cards instead of four.

Furthermore, the report cards are now aligned with the "Next Generation Learning Standards" and will have grading keys that will reflect student progress to-



George Ross Mackenzie Elementary enhances building security with window coverings, balancing privacy and safety for staff with a display of school spirit.

ward New York State standards and will be on a scale between 1 and 4.

Carpentieri said giving a number grade at this stage of the student's career does not provide a complete view of how the student is learning in the school.

"I wanted to give a better overall picture of students," said Carpentieri.

If a student scores a 1, it means they need to meet NYS Next

Generation Standards and represents that the student needs more support and increased time with the subject and smaller chunks of information.

If students score a 2, they are considered partially proficient in the standards for their grade.

And if a student scores a 3, they are considered proficient in the standard and demonstrate a level that is expected and sufficient during the year.

Moreover, if a student scores a 4, they exceed NYS Standards and have a "mastery" or "proficiently" in the standard.

According to the district, the standards-based report card will use academic performance indicators that are "observable and objective."

Clubs

Carpentieri said this year, the elementary school is offering 15 clubs, and about 77 percent of the students are involved.

"I want to give extracurricular activities to elementary students," said Carpentieri.

The clubs are: Sensory Club; Storytelling Club; Beyblades Club; Book to Art Club; Color Me Calm Club; Mural Club; Craft Club; Play-Doh Club; Painting Club; Checkers Club; Intramurals; Yoga and Mindfulness; Winter Fun and Games Club; and Lego Club.

"I'm really proud of the clubs and what's really great is that staff and parents are coming up with these great ideas," said Carpentieri.

One of those ideas is to one day offer American Sign Language as a club.

"The staff loves doing [the clubs] because it's their passion," said Carpentieri.

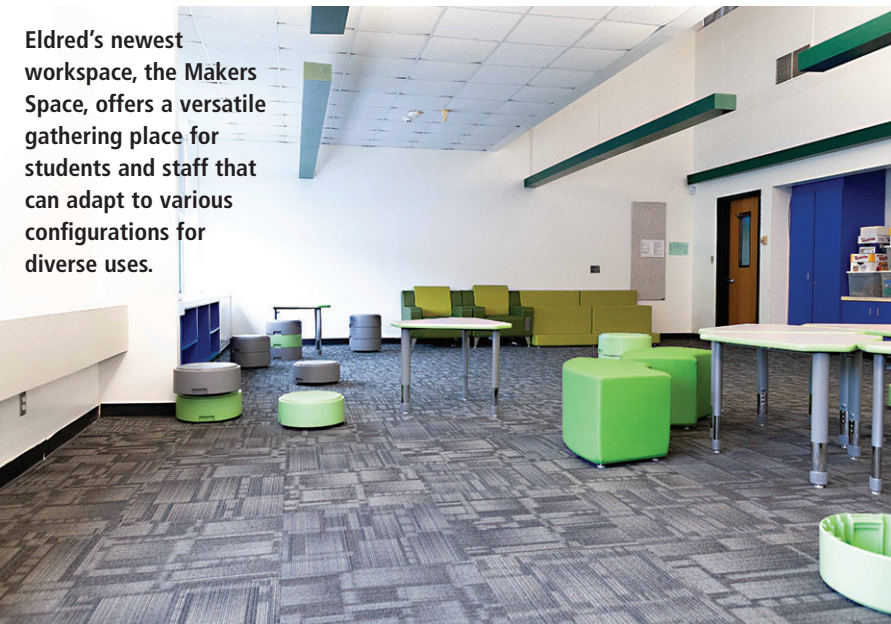
Leader in Me

Soon the Leader in Me program will be implemented throughout the district. Leader in Me is a concept based on Franklin Covey's best-selling book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*.

According to their website, Leader in Me is an evidence-based, comprehensive model that builds leadership and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4E

Eldred's newest workspace, the **Makers Space**, offers a versatile gathering place for students and staff that can adapt to various configurations for diverse uses.





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Principal Michael Carpentieri says he loves his job and cares for his students at George Ross Mackenzie Elementary, and is dedicated to their success.

children are not normally in school and not receiving a school breakfast and/or lunch.

Backpacks are filled on Fridays with non-perishable food items such as mac-n-cheese, cereal, crackers, cans of soup and oatmeal, and many other varieties of food.

Carpentieri said during the pandemic, many families received aid in the form of stimulus packages and child tax credits, but now those benefits are shutting down.

“We still need to support those families that have that need of support,” said Carpentieri.

One of those ways, Carpentieri said, was during the holiday season. The school had a number of families reach out, and the elementary school staff came together and “adopted” families during the holiday season.

“Through donations, we were able to really, I want to say like, pretty much like save Christmas

for about eight to 10 families, providing presents, food, gift cards,” said Carpentieri.

Moreover, Carpentieri said he is really proud of the staff for coming together, adding, “I know a lot of schools do a lot more because they’re bigger and larger than us. But we’re such a small district, and it was amazing the amount of help that we were able to give.”

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2E
life skills in students, creates a high-trust school culture, and lays the foundation for sustained academic achievement.

Currently, the schools will begin to train the staff and teachers on the project before it’s implemented through the schools with the students.

“We went and saw how it’s operating right now in the Liberty School District - myself and my school psychologist,” said Carpentieri.

The students and staff are taught the seven habits that are based on Stephen Covey’s seven habits. They are ...

Habit 1: Be Proactive (You’re in Charge)

Habit 2: Begin with The End in Mind (Have a Plan)

Habit 3: Put First Things First (Work First, Then Play)

Habit 4: Think Win-Win (Everyone Can Win)

Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, then to Be Understood (Listen Before You Talk)

Habit 6: Synergize (Together Is Better)

Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw

(Balance Feels Best)

“The two things I want more than anything for my students are the ability to have resilience when something goes wrong and empathy to understand someone else’s feelings. We think that is a framework that will be able to help us,” added Carpentieri.

Rock Wall

Through grants, the elementary school has been able to install a rock wall in the gymnasium.

This rock wall, fitted with multiple safety harnesses, gives the students different levels of difficulty.

Carpentieri said it had been a real asset to the physical education program as the students are able to enjoy such thrilling activities indoors.

Carpentieri said he hopes to have the complete set of walls that can be outfitted on the other side of the gym and wall so you can have multiple teams using the rock wall.

Giving Back

Carpentieri is happy that the Backpack program is back and is helping families who are in need.

The program offers assistance with food on the weekend when

Principal Michael Carpentieri, center, is grateful for the support of his dedicated staff: Secretary Kezia LaBuda and Assistant to the Principal Jennifer Anderson.



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Eldred welcomes familiar face as Superintendent

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PATRICIO ROBAYO

The Eldred Central School District has a new Superintendent, former Junior-Senior High School Principal Traci Ferreira.

Dr. John Morgano stepped down as Superintendent last year after five years of service to the district.

Ferreira says, "I am very excited about this opportunity and endeavor."

Moreover, Ferreira says she is grateful that she had Morgano as a mentor. Her time spent as the Junior-Senior principal has prepared her for this new chapter in Eldred's history.

"Dr. Morgano did amazing things and was able to coach me in a lot of what the position entails. I am

ready and look forward to all the challenges ahead," said Ferreira.

Furthermore, Ferreira said she has a wonderful staff that aids her in managing the district and is happy for all the new opportunities the district will have this year and in the future.

Ferreira said there are so many things to look forward to, from students in Eldred who can potentially graduate with an associate's degree from SUNY Sullivan to having 25 sporting teams ready to go and more and more school clubs.

Additionally, Ferreira said she is also happy that music is coming back in a big way for the district with a new music teacher at the elementary school that is bringing the band back, as well as an art teacher that will be incorporating more of the graphic arts to the district.



Traci Ferreira, former Junior-Senior High School Principal, takes the helm as the new Superintendent of the Eldred Central School District.

Without raising taxes, the district is entering a Capital Bond Project that addresses several repairs at the schools, along with library upgrades, maker spaces, and new athletic fields.

Ferreira plans to stay for the long haul, see the capital bond through to completion, and celebrate with the district as the students gather for the 2026 homecoming ceremonies.

Ferreira says she is hopeful for the future, "We are small, but we are mighty."



Superintendent Traci Ferreira eagerly anticipates the completion of the much-needed capital bond project that will benefit the school for years to come.

Marie K. Devore, D.M.D.



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School Scene

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Conklin takes helm at Eldred JS/HS



STORY AND PHOTO
BY PATRICIO ROBAYO

Michael Conklin, the newest Junior-Senior High School Principal in Eldred, is excited for the academic success of his students.

Eldred has a new Junior-Senior High School Principal, Michael Conklin, from Warwick.

Due to Traci Ferreira, the former Junior-Senior High School Principal, becoming Eldred's newest Superintendent, a position to lead the high school became available.

Conklin went to Mount Saint Mary College and received his Bachelor's Degree in History before moving to the New York Institute of Technology, where he received his first Master's in Instructional Technology, which led him to go to Long Island University to receive his second Master's Degree, this one in Educational Leadership.

Starting his career in education as an elementary school teacher, Conklin, became the assistant principal for two years and a co-principal for one year in the Florida New York School District before coming

to Eldred.

Conklin, an avid sports fan, also has three daughters, Ellie, 7, Kailey, 4, and Molly, 2, who he loves to spend time with when he is not working.

Conklin says he wants his students at the Eldred Junior-Senior High School to feel welcomed.

"I want them to feel engaged; I want them to feel safe. We are creating young adults who will go out into the world right, and we want them to be successful," said Conklin.

Furthermore, Conklin said he is happy to be part of the newly formed Parent Teacher Association and to have open dialogue with student's parents and guardians.

Moreover, he is excited that his entering freshmen will have the potential to walk away in their senior year with a high school diploma and an Associate's Degree from SUNY Sullivan.

He said not only will the students

receive higher learning with the college courses, but it also gives the teaching staff the opportunity to teach subjects at a higher level.

"I have faculty here that are very capable of doing that; they'll do a great job," said Conklin.

Since Conklin has taken the job, he has also assumed the Athletic Director role since November to help fill a void. The district says a new Athletic Coordinator has been hired and is thankful for Conklin stepping in.

"Mr. Conklin has done a great job," said Ferreira.

Conklin said he is looking forward to upgrading the school's library, which will have a more digital enhancement thanks to the new Capital Bond Project that was recently approved.

Conklin said the goal is to keep the original architecture of the room and still meet the needs of today's students.

"Keeping the integrity of the library but also making it accessible and a modern 21st-century room," said Conklin.

Additionally, Conklin said seeing the athletic fields get the much-needed upgrade will make students want to come to the school.

"I think we have a great opportunity here to be the best," said Conklin.

In fact, Conklin said he looks forward to expanding the Graphic Arts in the school, as well as the computer sciences.

The goal, Conklin said, is to give the students the tools and skills they will need to have a career after they leave school or if they decide to continue their education journey.

Conklin added, "I want to put a heavy focus on like STEM initiatives, where our kids are learning the skills that they will need to get jobs when they're older."



ANTHONY MORGANO | DEMOCRAT

Molly McKereil launches a goal kick in the Section IX Class D Championship game against Mount Academy.

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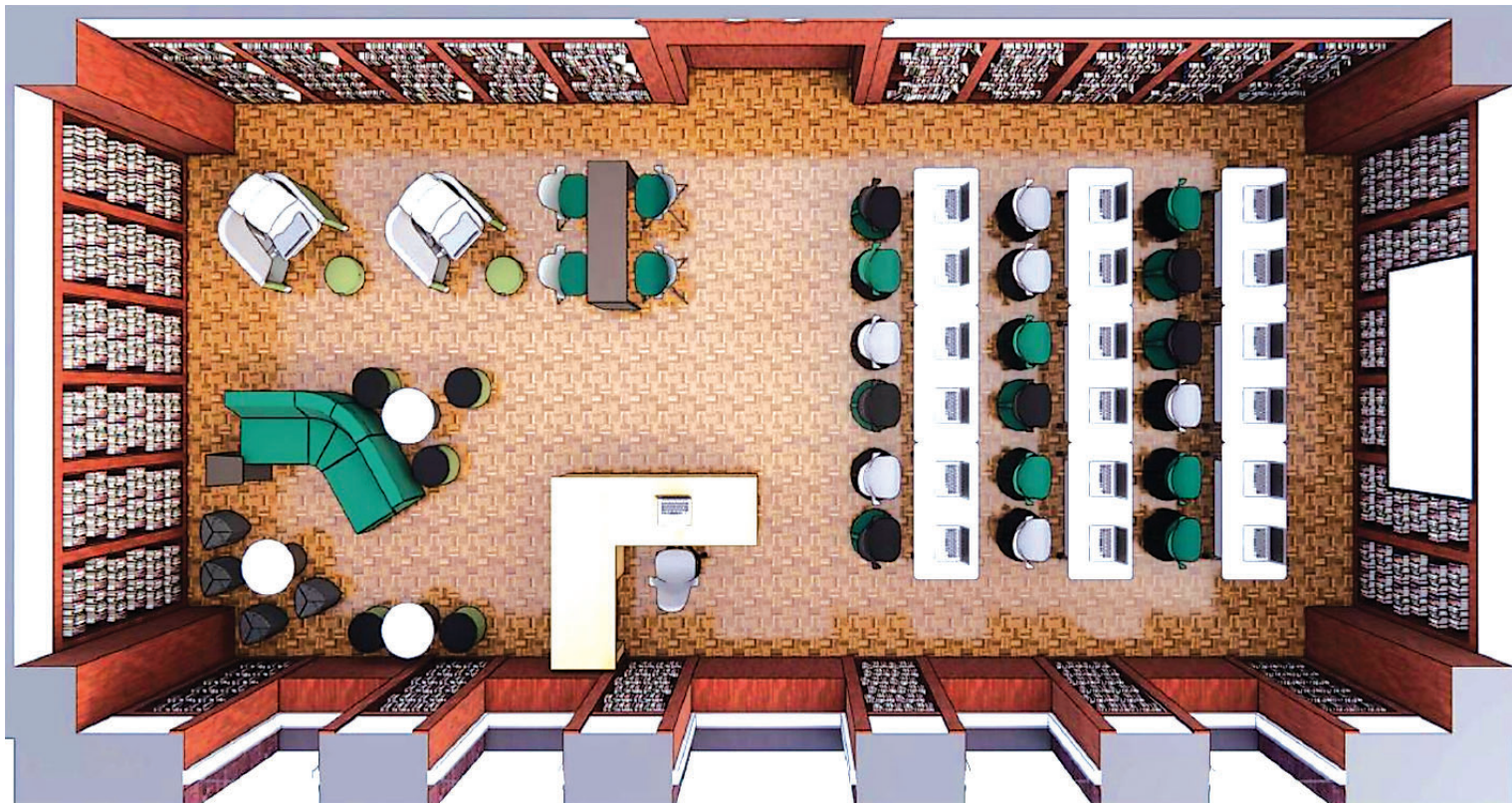


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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Libraries within the district will be turned into global learning centers as part of the upcoming capital project recently approved by voters.

Capital project catapults Eldred into the future

BY PATRICIO ROBAYO

The Eldred Central School District has secured approval for a Capital Bond project, providing the necessary funding for vital upgrades to the district's schools.

The project will serve as a catalyst for growth and development within the community for years to come.

The voters approved borrowing \$11.6 million to help pay for upgrades for the George Ross Mackenzie Elementary School and the Eldred Junior-Senior High School.

The project's total cost will be \$12.7 million; the district will use its reserve funds to help pay the difference from the borrowed amount.

The improvements will be made without raising taxes in the district.

How?

According to Eldred Superintendent Traci Ferreira, the district will stop paying its current bond right when the new bond payment begins, thus no increase to taxpayers.

What needs to be done?

For the George Ross Mackenzie Elementary School, a new roof will be

installed to replace the aging and leaking one, along with the sidewalks that need to be repaired.

Furthermore, the library in the Elementary School and the Junior-Senior School will get an updated look and function as a "global learning center" that helps to foster collaboration, communication, and academic growth, according to the district.

"We're just looking at how to modernize the design but keep the integrity of the original architecture and design," said Ferreira.

Also, a "maker's space" was created at the Elementary School, combining the computer lab and office space into a large open space. In this space, the furniture can be moved and changed into different configurations to fit the activity in the room, from a parent-teacher conference to a teaching-staff meeting or hosting one of the many after-school clubs.

As for the Eldred Junior Senior High School, the upgrades will include installing a wider all-weather football field and track that can host soccer games and be open to the community.

According to Ferreira, one-third of the home sports games had to be canceled in recent years due to the field being unsafe for the students to use after a weather event. Some of the games were played at neighboring fields.

Ferreira said there had not been a home track meet for the past five years due to the current track field condition.

While the new field is being installed, the restrooms will also receive a much-needed upgrade that will make them more accessible and ADA-compliant.

Moreover, a new concession area will be built along with more spectator seating that will be embedded into the surrounding landscape.

Ferreira says the fields will allow Eldred to once again hold outdoor graduations at the school.

Ferreira said the fields can be ready for the 2026 homecoming ceremonies and looks forward to participating in the ceremonies, knowing that the future is bright for the small but mighty Eldred Central School District.

For a full list of upgrades, visit the Eldred Central School District website.



ANTHONY MORGANO | DEMOCRAT

Frankie Whitmore uses his free arm to break a tackle.

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