

# ELLICOTTVILLE

DISTRICT • NEWSLETTER

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## Hunt Selected As Presidential Scholars Nominee

Senator George M. Borrello announced that Alexander Hunt, a senior at Ellicottville Central School, has been nominated as a candidate for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program by State Education Department Interim Commissioner Betty A. Rosa. Senator Borrello recommended Alex for the Presidential Scholars Program based on his academic and athletic achievements and his community service. Alex is one of 20 nominees from New York State for the national 2021 Presidential Scholars Program.

“Alex has the drive and determination to be successful in whatever path he follows in college and beyond. He excels academically and athletically while making service to others a priority in his life. I am very proud to have recommended Alex as a Presidential Scholars nominee,” Senator Borrello said. “Alex has a tremendous work ethic. He’s ranked first in his class

and will graduate from Ellicottville Central with 52 college credits.”

The Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964 by President Lyndon Johnson with the mission of recognizing and honoring outstanding high school seniors, and thereby encouraging high attainment among all students. Over 7,600 exceptional graduating high school seniors have been named as Presidential Scholars.

“Thank you to Interim Commissioner Rosa for advancing Alex as one of New York’s 20 nominees. The Presidential Scholars Program recognizes America’s best and brightest high school scholars. Alex certainly belongs among them. Being a nominee for the Presidential Scholars Program is a prestigious honor. Congratulations to Alex and his family. I wish him well as the process moves forward,” Senator Borrello said. The White House Commission on Presidential Scholars selects honored



scholars annually based on their academic success, artistic excellence, essays, school evaluations and transcripts, as well as evidence of community service, leadership, and demonstrated commitment to high ideals. The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program (applications by invitation only) recognizes and honors some of our nation’s most distinguished graduating high school seniors.



## Second Graders Learning to Code

The 2nd grade students in Mrs. Farnum’s class have been hard at work learning how to write code (the process of creating instructions that tell a computer/robot what to do). With the help of Sphero Mini, Bee-Bot, and CodeSpark these students are becoming promising computer programmers!



# Superintendent's Message: *2021 Brings Optimism & Hope!*

## 2021 STILL COMING INTO

**FOCUS:** The new year is here! As we move forward, I believe there is so much for which we can be optimistic. We have reached the half way point of the 2020-21 school year and we continue to remain open for students. Sure, we have had to switch to an all remote model from time to time, but, by and large, we have been open for students. (A huge “**THANK YOU**” goes out to the *entire* faculty and staff for all their hard work, flexibility and dedication to make this happen.) The New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) has given the green light for more interscholastic athletics to take place. Vaccines are being given, and their continued administration provides a light at the end of the “COVID Tunnel.” In conjunction with the Department of Health (DOH) we have learned how to cut down on the amount of people that have to quarantine while striving to ensure safety. We still have a long way to go, but together, we will get there.

## THOUGHTS ON THE 2021-22

**BUDGET DEVELOPMENT:** Usually by this point in the school year, I am able to provide some fairly accurate preliminary information about the budget for the following school year; in this case, the 2021-22 school year. Unfortunately, I am not able to do that at this point. There are still so many questions, possibilities, rumors and computations still taking place.

- While a relief package has been approved at the Federal level, exactly how this will translate into funds for schools remains a question, as the State is holding some of the total allocation for education. We are also trying to determine which, if any, this increase would supplant (replace) or supplement (add) to aid we currently receive.

- The Governor's proposed budget is out, but there are a large number of unknowns associated with it. The good news here is that many of the organizations that we are affiliated with such as The New York State School Boards' Association (NYSBAA) and the New York State Council of School Superintendents (NYSCOSS) are providing guidance and assistance.

- The proposed NYS budget does not

provide for in an increase in Foundation Aid; instead, freezing allocations at the 2019-20 levels.

- Once again, the proposed budget includes combining various types of aid that districts have relied on for years. The State's position on this is that it provides flexibility for districts. School districts' argument against this is it makes it hard for districts to track and project aid allocations.

- The proposed budget includes changes to the STAR program.

- One part of the budget that we do know about right now is the “tax cap.” We have been notified that the tax cap will be set at 1.23%, which is well below 2%. Please remember that the “tax cap” is just part of a very complicated process to calculate the overall tax levy. That being said, a 1.23% in this part of the process equates to approximately \$60,000 less in the levy if the District uses that figure. Early indications are that the District may need to exceed the “tax cap,” but, at this time, it is too early to say for sure or by how much.

This list is not an exhaustive list of all the budget challenges or changes being proposed this year. It is meant to demonstrate that the COVID Pandemic continues to impact the financial stream for schools. Please be assured that we will work hard to keep abreast of all these changes to create a fiscally sound and responsible budget for the District.

**SNOW DAYS:** A number of questions have been asked about snow days this year. New York State has approved a pilot this year where schools districts can use a remote instructional day in lieu of a “snow day” should it have to close in the event of inclement weather. Different districts are approaching this concept differently. At ECS, the current plan is to have a “traditional” snow day for the first day we have to close due to inclement weather. This means that the school would be “closed” and students and teachers would not be required to participate in remote instruction that day and there would be no meal deliveries. The District will evaluate if any additional inclement weather days will be held as traditional snow days or if remote instruction will take place.

## TECHNOLOGY / CONNECTIVITY:

We continue to make progress towards providing access to technology and the internet. Please recall that due to several very generous donations from the ECS community, we were able to purchase enough iPads to ensure that each family with elementary aged children would receive one. These iPads have arrived and we are in the process of setting them up and distributing them. A substantial amount of these have in fact already been distributed and we anticipate the rest of them being put into circulation as soon as possible.

In addition to this iPad initiative, we have been working with several internet providers to offer increased access throughout the District. We are currently working with AT&T, Verizon, T-Mobile and a company called Kajeet to provide hotspots. We are finding that this variety is needed as some simply work in areas that others do not. We will be working with families to provide these as warranted as the year continues. At the same time, we are eagerly looking forward to additional connectivity in the form of cable wires through Armstrong. At a meeting in December they indicated that services will be coming to various parts of the District throughout the 2021 year. We do not have a definitive timeline at this point, but are optimistic that it is coming.

**MOVING FORWARD:** On behalf of the District, **THANK YOU** to the entire community for all of your assistance, understanding and patience as this year has played out and continues to evolve. It has certainly been interesting and challenging as the guidelines, rules and allowances coming from the Governor's Office, the DOH, and State Education Department, etc. have changed as the year has progressed. Be assured that as we move forward, we will continue to do everything we can to provide a safe and sound educational experience for students. There will, most certainly, be some “bumps” along the way, as we are learning every day. We will continue learning, we will look for opportunities, and, as a team, we will persevere. We're Eagles; it's what we do!

Sincerely,

*Bob*

Bob



# All WNY Fall Scholar Athletes

## ALL-WESTERN NEW YORK WINNERS AND HONORABLE MENTIONS

The 2020 All-Western New York Scholar Athlete fall sports team consists of 100 winners and 753 honorable mentions.

To be nominated for the team, students must have carried a 90-plus average for the previous six semesters and been a starter or significant player in their fall sport. The scholar-athlete team is open to seniors from Western New York's 100-plus public and private schools and the selections are made by a committee.

Representing Ellicottville Central School as a winner of this honor is Senior Bryce Butler. Bryce, a member of the Boys Varsity Soccer team, was a key contributor on the soccer field, earning League Offensive MVP this season. In addition to this, Bryce has also excelled in the classroom. Congratulations on a great senior season Bryce!

Ellicottville Central School also received several Honorable Mentions from the fall season as well. From Boys Soccer: Clayton Rowland, Noah Steinbronner, Caleb Jennings, and Alex Hunt were all chosen as Honorable Mention. From Girls Soccer: Jenna Hadley, Sammi Lin, Courtney Sexton, Hayly Fredrickson, and Logan Fredrickson were all chosen as Honorable Mention.

Congratulations to these seniors for representing Ellicottville both on and off the field!



## Kindergarten & PreK Registration:

### PRE-KINDERGARTEN

If you are a parent/guardian of a child turning 4 years old by December 1, 2021 and have interest in enrolling your child in our half-day Pre-k program, please contact Mrs. Kosinski in the Elementary Office at 699-2318, ext. 1600.

Each year, New York State reviews the funding structure for the grant supported Pre-K programs. If our Pre-K program is again funded, acceptance letters for the program will be mailed this June.

The state considers a child pre-school age if their birth date is between December 1, 2016 and November 30, 2017.

In order for your child to be considered for our program, a Pre-k application will need to be filled out and returned to the elementary office.

If you have any questions or need assistance with this application process, please feel free to call the elementary office.

### KINDERGARTEN

Do you have a child that will be Kindergarten age this fall, but is not currently enrolled in our Pre-K program?

If you do, please notify the Elementary Office at 699-2318, ext. 1600 so we may include your family in any upcoming activities this spring such as Kindergarten Screening.

Our Kindergarten program is a full school day. The state considers a child Kindergarten age if they turn 5 years old before December 1, 2021.



## Regarding "Erin's Law"

*Dear ECS Families,*

New York State has implemented a new law called "Erin's Law" which mandates all public schools to develop a curriculum regarding sexual abuse prevention. This curriculum is designed for students in kindergarten through eighth grade. The purpose is to help students understand and identify sexual abuse, exploitation and trafficking, know how to respond, and how to seek help should they fall victim to such circumstances. Please know the curriculum developed is guided by the New York State Education Department and is age appropriate.

During the 2020-2021 school year, we will be incorporating this new curriculum in our well-established 2nd Step Program. Our 2nd Step Program is a social-emotional and health education program which addresses many of the objectives outlined in Erin's Law. If you should have any questions/concerns regarding the implementation of this curriculum or Erin's Law requirements, please feel free to contact the appropriate main office.

More information on Erin's Law can be found on the New York State Education Department link at: <http://www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction/erins-law>

## A Special THANK YOU!



The Project Christmas committee would like to thank the Ellicottville Central School community for their continued and very generous support. This past December, the program was able to provide assistance to 45 families. While things may have looked a bit different, one thing that did not change was the support the Project received. We are all so fortunate to live in a community where support is available when it is needed. Best wishes to everyone, for a very Healthy and Happy 2021!

**Ellicottville Central School**  
5873 Route 219  
Ellicottville, NY 14731  
[www.ellicottvillecentral.com](http://www.ellicottvillecentral.com)

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**Administration**

Mr. Robert Miller, Superintendent  
Mr. Erich Ploetz, 6-12 Principal  
Mrs. Maren Bush, Elementary Principal / Director of Curriculum



**Yearbook Info:**

- Old yearbooks are available for purchase, as long as supplies last.
- COVID is hitting the yearbook hard. This year's book will be smaller than previous years. There will NOT be an elementary book this year, only one book PreK-12. The cost of the book is \$40.
- We need to rely on the community for pictures. Please email pictures to [cbauer@ecsny.org](mailto:cbauer@ecsny.org).



**Non-Public School Transportation Requests**

Requests for transportation of non-public school children should be submitted to the Ellicottville Central School District Superintendent's Office by April 1, 2021. Regulations require that the district transport students to non-public schools when a student resides within 15 miles of the non-public school. The 15 miles is measured from the home of the student to the non-public school.  
**Please send requests to:**  
Ellicottville Central School  
ATTN: Mr. Robert Miller, Superintendent  
5873 Route 219  
Ellicottville, New York 14731

**A Match Made in ECS Heaven**

Ellicottville Elementary and BOCES Big Picture classes are getting creative with how they are meeting different needs during this tricky time. Elementary students needed a chance to get out and stretch their legs, while Big Picture Seniors needed some opportunities to meet their community service hours. To help solve both problems the Big Picture students have adorned their hallway with elementary learning materials. Viola! The older students can reach their community service goals, and the younger students get out for a walk with their class and work their brains at the same time. *It's a match made in ECS heaven!*

**ELLICOTTVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL TAX CODE: 181**