



# Greene Central School NEWSLETTER

Volume XXXII, Number 4

March/April 2012

## Superintendent's Message

I would like to thank everyone who joined us at our Town Hall meeting on February 15. Turn out was great and I trust this evening provided an informative but sobering glimpse into the fiscal challenges facing Greene CSD and schools across New York State. Currently we are working hard to finalize the 2012/2013 budget based on the Governor's proposal. While it is possible that there may be slight changes once the legislature weighs in, next year will without a doubt be another challenging year as funding from Albany is again significantly reduced. I must still ask for your advocacy right now to pressure our leaders in Albany to correct the inequities in the current proposal. In this newsletter I will provide contact information, talking points and a sample letter that you may use in your advocacy efforts. This information will also be available on our school website.

For the third year in a row, Greene and other schools across New York State have been assessed a Gap Elimination Adjustment or a reduction in State aid. Under the Governor's proposal, Greene stands to lose \$1.29 million in aid for the coming school year. Together with losses over the past two years, we have seen a reduction of over \$3.6 million in basic school aid. We have responded to this challenge by cutting spending, reducing staff by over 15% and utilizing reserves to fund basic costs. This cannot be sustained. If funding is not corrected, we will find ourselves in the position where the programming our kids need and deserve will be in jeopardy.

As I stated in our last newsletter, we are well aware of the fiscal challenges facing New York State and that schools will have to shoulder part of this burden. However, I also have a responsibility to our children to ensure that each and every one of them receives the best quality educational program possible. In light of this critical responsibility, I have to plead for change in Albany. Your help in communicating concern to our leaders probably poses the most likely prospect of changing the current system. In this newsletter edition you will find contact information as well as a sample letter. Please utilize this template and customize your correspondence with personal illustrations and/or reference to one or more of the following issues or *Talking Points*:

- Ask that the \$250 million set aside for competitive grants be applied to the Foundation Aid formula. Now is not the time to ask schools to compete for such vital funding.
- Press for meaningful mandate reform. Insist that New York State not transfer additional costs to schools and that significant action be taken to reduce other costs imposed on schools by state mandates.
- Insist that Albany consider adjustments to our current aid formulas that would ensure that high needs districts receive state funding required to ensure their students receive a sound basic education as guaranteed in the New York State Constitution.

As a community, we need to stand together and speak out on behalf of our children. New York State schools are at the edge of a funding cliff that has the potential to devastate the educational experience of children across our great state. We must speak together and loudly to our state leaders to prevent this from happening.

Sincerely,  
*Jonathan R. Retz*  
Superintendent of Schools

**PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING**  
**Monday, May 7, 6:30 p.m.**  
**Auditorium**

**SCHOOL BUDGET AND  
BOARD MEMBER VOTE**  
**Tuesday, May 15**  
**11:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.**  
**Auditorium Lobby**

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## New York State's Property Tax Levy Cap Facts

**Q: Can my school tax levy increase by more than 2 percent?**

A: Yes, despite how it has been communicated, the new cap does not limit levies to 2% but rather it establishes a *tax levy limit*. This *tax levy limit* may exceed the commonly used threshold of 2%.

**Q: What is a *tax levy limit*?**

A: This is the highest proposed tax levy for a school district that can be approved with a simple majority vote (50 percent or better). The *tax levy limit* is calculated using an eight step formula. Each district will be required to calculate their own *tax levy limit* which is designed to take into consideration factors that influence each district's wealth. Any district wishing to propose a levy increase beyond this *tax levy limit* will require a 60% supermajority vote for approval.

**Q: How might my tax bill be different as a result of the tax levy?**

A: The method of calculating an individual tax bill has not changed. Your tax bill is calculated using your property's assessed value and the tax rate (amount of taxes per \$1,000 of assessed value). The state may also adjust tax rates by applying equalization rates in an effort to even out the tax burden across a district. The new law only imposes conditions on the level of voter approval for different tax levy increases.

**Q: What are the implications of this tax cap legislation on my district?**

A: The tax cap will impact all districts across New York State to varying degrees. Some will be affected more than others. Schools with lower property wealth will have a more difficult time managing the impact and may likely find it difficult to maintain current educational programming.

**Q: What if my school's budget is not approved by voters?**

A: School districts have the same options available in the event the initial budget is not approved. These options include putting the same budget up for a re-vote, adjusting the budget and re-voting or adopting a contingent budget.

## Sample Letter To Elected Officials

Dear Assemblyman/Senator/Governor;

As a resident of the Greene Central School District, I write today to beg your support for our school district. While I realize the dire financial position the state finds itself in, the proposed funding for our school will have a severe and devastating effect on the quality of educational programming offered to our children.

The Gap Elimination Adjustment currently proposed would cost Greene more than \$1,000 per student. Because Greene is highly dependent on state aid, this loss cannot be managed to the extent wealthier districts are able to. At the same time we are informed that the per pupil cuts to many wealthier districts are far less than those we will experience. This is not right.

As a parent of children currently enrolled in Greene Central School I am greatly concerned. I am concerned that my children will not have the educational opportunities that those before them have enjoyed and more importantly, that are essential for their preparation for either college or the workplace.

To help address this funding inequity I would ask your consideration of the following:

Apply the \$250 million set aside for competitive grants to basic Foundation Aid. This money should not be based on competition where wealthier districts may enjoy advantages. Instead, it should be designated to those with the greatest need.

Help reign in costs for schools with meaningful mandate reform. Look at ways to help districts control costs that are currently outside their control and please do not impose new or additional costs on schools.

Please consider adjustments to our current funding formula that will ensure high needs districts receive funding needed to provide a sound basic education for all our kids.

Thank you for your energy and efforts on behalf of our children.

Sincerely,

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## Legislative Contact Information

**Governor Andrew M. Cuomo**

New York State Capitol Building

Albany, New York 12224

Phone: (518) 474-8390 Fax (518) 474-1513

**Senator Thomas A. Libous**

Albany Office

188 State Street

Albany, New York 12247

Phone: (518) 455-2677 Fax: (518) 455-2065

District Office

44 Hawley St. Room 1607

Binghamton, New York 1901

Phone: (877) 854-2687 Email: [senator@senatorlibous.com](mailto:senator@senatorlibous.com)

**Assemblyman Clifford W. Crouch**

Albany Office

Legislative Office Building 450

Albany, New York 12248

Phone: (518) 455-5741 Fax: (518) 648-6089

District Office

1 Kattelville Road, Suite 1

Binghamton, New York 13901

Phone: (607) 648-6080 Email: [CrouchC@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:CrouchC@assembly.state.ny.us)

## High School Students of the First Semester—January 2012



*Back row: Garrett Hendershott, Brandon Davis, Wyatt VanderBunt; front row: Akeem Daniels, Colleen Dietrich, Leanna Miller, Alicia Olivieri; missing: Taylor Ellis*

Greene Central High School proudly announces the students who were chosen by the High School faculty and staff as Students of the Semester for the first semester of the 2011-2012 school year.

9th Grade—**Alicia Olivieri**, daughter of Irene and Vincenzo Olivieri, Greene; **Wyatt VanderBunt**, son of Holly and Scott VanderBunt, Greene

10th Grade—**Leanna Miller**, daughter of Leah and Timothy Miller, Greene; **Brandon Davis**, son of Teresa and Paul Davis, Greene

11th Grade—**Colleen Dietrich**, daughter of Julie and Charles Dietrich, Greene; **Garrett Hendershott**, son of Karen and Scott Hendershott, Greene

12th Grade—**Taylor Ellis**, daughter of Lorie and Gerald Ellis, Greene; **Akeem Daniels**, brother of Aisha Charles, Johnson City

## High School Calendar

### MARCH

- 23-25 Footlights Production *Music Man*
- 30 Sock Hop Dance

### APRIL

- 3 College Days (Juniors)
- 5 Bus Drills
- End of 30 Week Marking Period
- 6-13 Spring Break—No Classes**
- 16 High School Blood Drive
- 19 Report Cards Mailed Home
- 20 Eligibility Begins

## Intermediate and Middle School NYS Testing Schedule

The New York State testing season is quickly approaching! All students in grades 3 through 8 are required to take exams in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. Students in grades 4 and 8 also are required to take a Science exam that contains both written and performance components. The dates for these exams are as follows:

### ELA—GRADES 3-8

Tuesday, April 17-Thursday, April 19

### MATHEMATICS—GRADES 3-8

Wednesday, April 25-Friday, April 27

### SCIENCE PERFORMANCE—GRADES 4 AND 8

Grade 4: Wednesday, May 23-Friday, May 25

Grade 8: Wednesday, May 23-Thursday, May 24

### SCIENCE WRITTEN—GRADES 4 AND 8

Monday, June 4

Please keep these dates in mind when scheduling appointments to ensure that your child is present on the testing dates. In order to best prepare your child for the state exams, ensure that they get a good night's rest before each testing day and begin each morning with a healthy breakfast!

## Student Art Work on Display

Primary students **Amy Hillier** and **Dalton Krupp** along with Intermediate students **Amy Bentley** and **Logan Kennedy** are representing our district in the New York State Art Teachers Association Legislative Exhibit in Albany. This annual student art show is held from March 12-16 at the Legislative Office Bldg. in Albany. The show features hundreds of K-12 art works from around the state.

On March 14, the young artists and their families will be honored at a reception, where they'll have the chance to meet some of New York State's lawmakers.

Congratulations, girls and boys, we're proud of you!

—Ms Dajnowski, Primary and Intermediate Art Teacher



*Amy Bentley and Logan Kennedy*

*Dalton Krupp and Amy Hillier*





## 7th Grade Physical Science



At the conclusion of their study of motion and forces, students in Mr. Rullo's 7th grade Physical Science class constructed balloon cars from their own designs and at home materials to achieve maximum distance and force. After building the cars outside of class, students raced them in class and completed a lab write-up that discussed speed, acceleration, velocity, force, Newton's laws and friction. At the end of the project and laboratory activity, students won awards for maximum distance, as well as best design and most effort awards, as voted on by their classmates.

The top 10 winners for maximum distance were **Juliana Myers** (13.5 meters), **Luke Erickson** (13.2m), **Zach Orzell** (10.7m), **Race Bentley** (10.0m), **Dominick Fink** (9.3m), **Breven Gilmore** (9.0m), **Leanna Whitman** (8.5m), **Grayson Delaney** (7.6m), **Gina Lobdell** (7.2m) and **Taylor Savage** (6.0m). Most effort awards went to **Taylor Savage**, **Ryan Lohsen**, **Matt DeJager** and **Nicole Hatfield**. Best design awards went to **Taylor Savage**, **Katie Anderson**, **Juliana Myers** and **Nicole Hatfield**.

Great job to all students, your efforts are commendable!

## Make a Wish® Foundation

### JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY MEMBERS SEE MAKE A WISH® AS A WORTHY CAUSE

Each year, Junior Honor Society Members are asked to head up a service activity to benefit their school or community. This year, several members worked together to raise money for the Make A Wish® Foundation. From October through December this group planned and carried out their chosen activity. The activity they chose was to organize a booth at the annual Middle School Holiday Carnival where members of the faculty and staff would get wet sponged in the face by students. Their booth was a great success and they raised \$135 in an hour and a half to send to Make a Wish®. The money was sent to the Central New York Chapter which services children in our area.



*JHS Members who made money for the Make A Wish® Foundation of Central New York. Pictured: Shawn Ayers, Alex Thompson and Maria Brown. Missing from photo: Elissa Case and Emily Montelione.*

## Drug Awareness Team Continues to Next Level in Competition



*L-R: Kileen McLeary, Rhianna Fornillo, Kathleen Hanrahan, Rory Hanrahan, Dixon Gao*

The Middle School Drug Awareness Team (DAT) has spent the year working hard to learn about a variety of drugs and their affects, conflict resolution, decision making, stress management and many other topics, in order to compete against other schools in Chenango County as part of the Drug Quiz Show. The team, consisting of eighth graders **Kileen McLeary**, **Rhianna Fornillo**, **Kathleen Hanrahan** and

**Dixon Gao**, and seventh grader **Rory Hanrahan** dedicated many lunches, 9th periods and time after school to learning about these topics.

On February 8 they applied their knowledge in the first round of a county-wide competition at the offices of the Chenango County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services. Their two wins against Oxford and Afton middle schools placed them at a tie with Sherburne-Earlville for first place in this round of the competition.

The next step is a single elimination competition that will take place in March at the Stanford Gibson Elementary school in Norwich against the other top three schools in the county. The winner of that competition will gain the title of Drug Quiz Show Champions for Chenango County. Congratulations and good luck DAT!

—*Emily Worsnopp*, DAT Advisor and Middle School Counselor

# Intermediate School Special Area Students of the Month

## DECEMBER



**Art:** Josh Titus (absent), Dustin Markham, Nicole Repp; **Music:** Clinton Orzell, Madilyn Vizvary, Rebecca Sullivan; **Computer:** MacKenzie Ingraham, Robert Champlain, Taylor Liddle; **Reading and Math:** Abigail Frost, Nathan Gabriel; **Chorus:** Cody Coleman; **Band:** Spencer Klumpp; **Girls' PE:** Paige Collins, Madison Rice, McKenna Sergi; **Boys' PE:** Hunter Wells, Robert Champlain, Brandyn Scott

## JANUARY



**Art:** Quintin Pezzino, Valerie Stracquadiano, Ashley Kenyon; **Music:** Ethan Ketzak, Amy Bentley, Rachel Smith; **Computer:** Victoria Fleury, Gillan Bacon, Kady Yanusas; **Reading and Math:** Olivia Sullivan, Burt Kinney; **Chorus:** Ciara Gunderson; **Band:** Eric Repp; **Girls' PE:** Kathleen Becker, Amy Bentley, Hannah Ludolph; **Boys' PE:** Clinton Orzell, Nathan Hurlburt, Liam Reid

## FEBRUARY



**Art:** Morgan Barrilleaux, Nate Erickson, Rebecca Sullivan, Conner Grant, Salina Smith; **Music:** Quintin Pezzino, Adrienne Button, Jordan Rogers, Bradley Taft; **Computer:** Wyatt Ingraham, Olivia Sullivan, Sara Tanzini; **Reading and Math:** Nathan Hurlburt, Gabby Gonzalez; **Chorus:** Tiffany Johns; **Band:** Bradley Taft; **Girls' PE:** Morgan Barrilleaux, Maggie Roosa, Ashley Kenyon; **Boys' PE:** Brandon Hilsbos, Zach Gibbon, Trent Sherwood

## Earth Day Everyday



Every student in second grade made an *Earth friendly* paper t-shirts for a hallway display. Students created lists of ways they could help our planet

Earth. Each student then wrote an Earth friendly tip on their t-shirt. Finally they added color and designs to their shirts. We hung their t-shirts out in the hallway for the whole school to see. This was a project

designed around our Arts in Education Theme this year. A learning goal for this year is for all students to be able to demonstrate activities they can do to save our Earth. As we progress through the year we will continue to learn more about our planet Earth and promote awareness and appreciation for the Earth and its environment through reading and writing activities as determined by our second grade curriculum.

—The Second Grade Team

## 2nd Annual 100 Cans For the 100th Day



On Friday, February 10 the Kindergarten classes at the Greene Primary School celebrated the 100th day of school by collecting 100 food items. These were collected and donate to the local Food Pantry. The goal was to collect 100 cans but the classes surpassed that by collecting 150 items donated. The food was delivered to the Food Pantry where it was received with many thanks. Thank you to all who helped make this successful.



## December Citizen of the Month

### 3RD GRADE



**Brei Wells**—Mrs. Browning  
**Calob Davenport**—Mrs. Erickson  
**Ayden Doolittle**—Mrs. Russ  
**Paige Collins**—Mrs. Whittaker

### 4TH GRADE



**Nolan Butler**—Ms. Hunter  
Absent: **Mackenzie Fowler**—Mr. Komperda  
**Dustin Markham**—Ms. Sanderson  
**Andrew Sloat**—Mrs. Gell

### 5TH GRADE



**Nicole Cowan**—Mrs. Beach  
**Korah Smith**—Mrs. Giannetto  
**Alyssa Acunto**—Mrs. McDermott  
**Taylor Liddle**—Mr. Evans

## January Citizen of the Month

### 3RD GRADE



**Morgan Barrilleaux**—Mrs. Browning  
**Kolby Finch**—Mrs. Erickson  
**Selena Emery**—Mrs. Russ  
**Brandan Hilsbos**—Mrs. Whittaker

### 4TH GRADE



**Sarah Retz**—Ms. Hunter  
**Nathan Hurlburt**—Mr. Komperda  
**Madison Rice**—Ms. Sanderson  
**Nik Ondrusek**—Mrs. Gell

### 5TH GRADE



**Neah Delaney**—Mrs. Beach  
**Liam Reid**—Mrs. Giannetto  
**Hannah Ludolph**—Mrs. McDermott

## JV Boys' Basketball Team

The Greene Junior Varsity Boys' Basketball Team had a tremendous season this year. The team finished with an overall record of 17-1 and an undefeated division record of 11-0. The boys' were 15-0 against MAC league schools and 2-1 against STAC league schools. The boys' also won two tournaments, the Greene Tip-off Tournament and the Greene Holiday Tournament.

Congratulations on an amazing season!

*Team Photo (l.-r.): Front—Dylan Barton, Luke Day, Alan Liddle; Middle: Sean Neimi, Marcus Lindstrom, Chris Phillips, Jhared Camber; top—Coach Howard, Cameron Race, Justin Eckstrom, Colin Brooks, Joe Miranda, Josh Hurlburt*



## February Citizen of the Month

### 3RD GRADE



**Nathan Gabriel**—Mrs. Browning  
**Wyatt Ingraham**—Mrs. Erickson  
**Jazmyne Mata**—Mrs. Russ  
**Emily Milk**—Mrs. Whittaker  
**Kolbie Cummings**—Mrs. Gell

### 4TH GRADE



**Conner Grant**—Ms. Hunter  
**Katelyn Pratt**—Mr. Komperda  
**Nathan Barry**—Ms. Sanderson

### 5TH GRADE



**Rachel Smith**—Mrs. Beach  
**Jenna Mack**—Mrs. Giannetto  
**Michael Repp**—Mrs. McDermott  
**Absent: Cameron Shepard**—Mr. Evans

## Treasures and Treats

The staff at Greene Central Schools has begun preparations for the 13th Annual Treasures and Treats Arts and Crafts Fair. The event is held each year to help fund special projects in Arts in Education for students in grades K through 12. The craft fair will take place on Saturday, November 10 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

We are currently seeking vendors for the event. If you are interested in participating, please contact Pat Washburn at the Intermediate School by phone or email (656-9891, [pwashbur@greenecsd.org](mailto:pwashbur@greenecsd.org)), or at home ([pwashburn@citlink.net](mailto:pwashburn@citlink.net)). For the last several years, we have made around \$4,000 each year for our student programs. If you are not a vendor, please mark your calendar so that you can attend this wonderful event.

## Fourth Grade Folktale Projects

The students in Ms. Sanderson's fourth grade class spent about six weeks studying folktales. The unit began by exploring and reading different types of folktales. They learned that although all folktales are stories that have been passed down from generation to generation, each genre of folktales has its own special characteristics.

A fable teaches a lesson or moral and often includes animals as characters. You may be familiar with fables such as *The Lion and the Mouse* and *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*. Fairy tales include royalty, an evil character and a magical element. The most famous fairy tale of all is *Cinderella*. Many different cultures have their own version of the Cinderella story. Pourquoi tales, otherwise known as legends, explain how or why things in nature came to be. One of the students' favorite pourquoi tales was *How Turtle's Back was Cracked*. Tall tales include exaggeration and humor, and often relate to the settling of America. The characters in a tall tale accomplish fantastic feats. Who hasn't heard of Paul Bunyan and his famous blue ox? Finally, there are trickster tales in which a smaller, weaker character outsmarts a strong, mean but foolish character. *The Gingerbread Man* is a traditional trickster tale.

Once students became familiar with these types of folktales they began creating one of their own. Each student chose one of the genres and created their own characters and events to match the characteristics of the genre they chose. Once the stories were revised and edited, students typed their tales and we turned them into story books which the students then illustrated.

As a culminating activity, the fourth graders read their stories to groups of kindergartners. The students in Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Lake, Ms. Poirier and Mrs. Livingston's classes enjoyed hearing the fantastic new tales and the fourth graders were able to model great fluent reading for the kindergartners!

—Ms. Sanderson



**1. Julianna Ayres (r.)**  
 reading to **Nadia Brown** and  
**Savannah Nowalk (l.-r.)**  
**2. Nathan Barry (r.)**  
 reading to **Cole LaPorte, Colin Colgan**  
 and **Owen Barry (l.-r.)**

**3. Ella Prindle (front)**  
 reading to **Kayla Kubo, Liberty Moshier,**  
**Myron Wells, Nickolas Flynn,**  
 and **Jack Prindle (l.-r.)**



# GREENE CENTRAL SCHOOL Greene, New York 13778

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

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### Mission Statement

*Greene Central School, in partnership with the community, will inspire students to learn the skills and behaviors necessary to become productive citizens.*

- Provide quality programs to prepare all students with skills and knowledge to become responsible citizens, productive workers, and lifelong learners.
- Provide safe, quality facilities, which enhance the programs for the District's students and community.
- Ensure long-term fiscal stability in order to provide the necessary programs and facilities to educate the children of the Greene Central School District.
- Communicate effectively with all members of the community to promote quality education in the Greene Central School District.

## Library News

Second grade students have been learning about the Caldecott Medal in the library. This prestigious award is given annually to an illustrator for the most distinguished American picture book for children. The 2012 winner was Chris Raschka for *A Ball for Daisy*. Three Caldecott Honor Books are also awarded this year: *Blackout*, *Grandpa Green*, and *Me . . . Jane*. These books will be available in the library soon.



*L-r: Olivia Ketzak, Hayden Lowe, Pipher Reid, Cooper Klumpp, Olivia Kennedy and Madelynn Cummings.*

Second grade students were challenged to participate in the library by reading Caldecott award-winning books. Those that participated enjoyed finding the monster from *Where the Wild Things Are* that was hidden in the library each day. Shown are some of the students that participated.

—Mrs. Merwarth, Primary Library

## Kindergarten Screening

Greene Primary School welcomes you to our Parent Information Night on Thursday, March 22 at 6:30 p.m.

Parents of our incoming Kindergarteners will have the opportunity to learn about our program and to meet the Kindergarten staff that will be working with their children. Screening appointments will also be scheduled at this time.

### KINDERGARTEN SCREENING DATES ARE AS FOLLOWS

Tuesday, April 17 through Thursday, April 19  
Tuesday, April 24 and Wednesday, April 25

If you have not registered your kindergartener please contact the Primary School Office at 656-5174, ext. 1.

In order to complete the registration process, we must have a copy of your child's birth certificate and immunization records. The office will be open on this night should you need to submit any additional records.

## UPK Registration

Applications for Greene Central School District's Universal Prekindergarten Program was mailed on March 9. If your child will be four years old on or before December 1, 2012, and you do not receive an application, please call the Primary School Office at 656-5174, ext. 1. Applications must be received by March 26.