There was a time, not so long ago, when summer meant “play,” and fall signaled “study” — and if there had been emojis to illustrate the mood associated with each, the first would have been met with a smiley face, the latter with a sad or, at least, a ‘meh’ countenance. Today, the lines have blurred.

Educators at all levels recognize that play and study can, and should, yield a common end: learning. Innovative summer programs and inventive school-year classes and special programs aim to engage students fully, to encourage them to explore and discover. The goal is reached through many avenues and those who follow 'roads less travelled' will find awe and wonder waiting. Our local schools are taking the next generation on journeys through new and exciting pathways, with committed guides to lead them along the way.

Sleepy Hollow

Challenge Summer Institute Grows in Tarrytown

Photo: Abigail Bartolacci enjoyed the hands-on combo of games and learning at Tarrytown’s Challenge Summer Institute.

Launching rockets into the sky, building a robot or surviving a zombie apocalypse: that’s just a taste of what children experienced at the Challenge Summer Institute this summer, now in its eighth year in Tarrytown. The two-week program, run out of the Washington Irving School, engaged students entering third through ninth grade in hands-on experiences, setting goals and achieving them. Challenge Enrichment teacher and founder, Maureen Massaro, said, “Students enjoy things when they get to choose.”
To immerse students in Native American culture, high school students, who volunteer as counselors, constructed a wigwam from pipes and canvas. The children made rain sticks, dream catchers, miniature teepees and more. Instructor Rachel Gonzalez, a former principal at WI, returned to the school to share her passion.

The Zombie Outbreak Class, with the help of instructor Sheree Spagnoli, led sixth through eighth graders into real life emergency training to teach their team how to survive a worldwide epidemic.

**Sleepy Hollow Middle School Welcomes New Principal**

Joshua Whitham, the new Sleepy Hollow Middle School principal, knows that he is in the right place. “It definitely is a place that’s open and inviting,” he said. “I am eager to enhance experiences for our students. They are the priority.”

The veteran educator has 17 years of experience, as principal of the A.B. Davis Middle School in Mount Vernon; as assistant principal at Middle School 203 in the Bronx, where he initially worked as a math coach and data specialist; and as a math teacher at Raphael Cordero Bilingual Academy at JHS 45 in Manhattan. Whitham, who started his career as a 6th grade elementary school teacher for gifted and talented students, is currently a doctoral student at Fordham University, studying K-12 Administration.

He says of the middle school environment, “The students are at an age when they are still innocent and have joy. They are taking their first steps again” into a world of more demanding work and complex schedules. He wants Sleepy Hollow Middle School to be a “true bridge” for students as they enter from Washington Irving Intermediate School and exit to Sleepy Hollow High School.
Whitham credited Superintendent of Schools Chris Borsari with beginning a new partnership with the Yale Center for Emotional Learning, which is helping Tarrytown introduce a program that emphasizes emotional growth in students during the critical pre-teen and teen years.

Sleepy Hollow Middle School Students Invited to New Bridge Opening Ceremony

Thirty Sleepy Hollow Middle School students had the chance on Aug. 24 to attend the ribbon-cutting ceremony that opened the new Tappan Zee Bridge, renamed the Mario M. Cuomo Bridge. The students, accompanied by Superintendent of Schools Christopher Borsari and Principal Joshua Whitham, were the guests of Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

Governor Cuomo drove on the new bridge span in a 1955 Corvette with Armando “Chick” Galella of Sleepy Hollow, a Bronze Star recipient and Pearl Harbor survivor who drove the same model year Corvette as part of the inaugural procession that crossed the Tappan Zee Bridge on December 15, 1955. The old bridge will serve southbound/eastbound drivers until the new bridge completely replaces the 62-year-old Tappan Zee Bridge later this year.

Students from Tarrytown, who have been heavily involved in educational programs involving the new NY Bridge, won a contest last year to name the baby falcon that was born in a nest on the bridge.

Briarcliff Manor

Library Media Specialist McCabe to Serve on Printz Award Committee
experience in the district and can assist the newcomers.

and other organizations, and signed up for library cards at the Ossining Public Library table. The
next step in the Family to Family program is to match up new families with those that have
parents and children, learned about local organizations and took a bus tour of Ossining.

Dozens of families recently attended a Family to Family welcome party for newcomers at Park
School, where they met other

After the unveiling of the mural in late June, students taped notes on a "Giving Tree" on a
cafeteria wall about what they could do to promote kindness. The AMD PTA supported this part
A shiny green, blue and black mosaic mural - a green flower with the words "be kind" in the
understanding are expected and practiced in the building.

Ossining's Anne M. Dorner Middle School unveils Kindness Mural and Giving Tree
installing a new floor in the gymnasium and expanding the nurse's office at Roosevelt School;
School (Open Door Family Medical Centers completed renovations to its space at AMD);
improvements before welcoming students for the fall.

Run/2 Mile Walk September 9. The nonprofit, created in 2003, strives to enrich education by
Forty families also spent Aug. 21 to 23 at Park School in a program called "Countdown to
Pre-K," which helped them get acclimated to the new environment.

Dozens of soon-to-be pre-kindergarteners took part in a scavenger hunt at Park School the
August Scavenger Hunt introduces pre-Kindergarteners to Park School
the whimsical – a pool for dogs. Other students suggested a rope course, a soccer field, a water
park, a small store that sells healthy food, a performance venue and a skateboard park.

Summer Academy Students create visions for revitalizing Ossining
Sanchez.
With the help of United Way of Westchester and Putnam, the Ossining School District converted
Ossining Girl Scouts and other community organizations. Ossining Superintendent of Schools
Raymond Sanchez and United Way President and CEO Alana Sweeny unveiled the bookmobile
books on fairies,

The district hopes to announce the appointment of a permanent assistant principal in October.

years as a principal in the Lower Hudson Valley.
Harrison have announced the appointment of John Wells as the interim assistant principal at
The Irvington School District Board of Education and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kristopher
consultants from Beauty & The Beast Storytellers for Elementary
Storytelling with Folk (& Fairy) Tales with
The list continues: Hooked on Sonics In-House Field Trip; How Did Geography Shape Our City?
Pilot Program to produce an active and collaborative way of thinking and approaching
Flexible Seating and Student-Centered Classroom Redesign that gives students the power of
basics of scale and proportion to build a 3-D model from a 2-D picture of Washington, D.C.;
The 21 grant awards include: A visit by author Jeff Anderson (Zack Delacruz: Me and My Big
Grammar; ArchForKids, where facilitators visit Irvington Middle School to teach students the
Harrison said. "The grant program inspires so many teachers to enrich curriculum, making
learning exciting and engaging."

educators.
The Irvington Education Foundation (IEF) has awarded 21 grants totalling $120,033 to district

and iPads that are being used by BHS and BMS students this year. Perez is studying video
unique summer training program offered on-site at the high school during which they became
This summer, around a dozen Briarcliff Manor high school (BHS) students participated in a
Techies rule!
ranging from Internet safety to mental health.

in behalf of The Board of Education. The staff also attended workshops on topics
Said McCabe, "I feel very lucky and honored to have been chosen to be part of such an
represent Briarcliff at various conferences and committee events through June 2019.
Teka McCabe, Briarcliff Manor's Library Media Specialist for the middle and high school, was
chosen by the American Library Association's Young Adult Services Association (YALSA) to be
the Newbery Medal for children's literature and the Caldecott Medal for illustrated children's

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September 2017 Education Roundup - River Journal Online
Written by Evelyn Mertens