

Enthusiasm and Energy:

by Peter J. Ferrara, Superintendent, ECS

Congratulations to the Chamber and to *Wawarsing.Net*! Finally, we have a publication that is a positive medium to help our community members become reacquainted with the wonder, beauty, and magical happenings of our area. The school district, Board of Education members, the superintendent, faculty, and staff wish the venture well.

This school year began with the theme... "FISH!" Sounds strange, doesn't it? The theme is derived from the workers at the Seattle Fish Market who love their work and share their enthusiasm willingly to anyone who will listen. They have unbounded energy. They know how to play. They are there for each other. They choose an attitude that is positive, and they seek and make their customers happy every day. These worker attitudes are what we want to share with our students, each other, and our customers – the parents and the community.

There are many positive happenings in our schools. Ellenville is the only New York State school district with single-gender classes in the middle school. The school district has received numerous inquiries and positive press about this experiment. Recently, the school district was also lauded at the State Conference for Public Relations. The district received several awards for its calendar and news publications, especially the budget newsletter.

The upgrade reconstruction project will go out for bid shortly. New heating boilers are being installed. In the project, the HS auditorium will be air-conditioned; the HS lobby will be redone. New trophy cases will be placed throughout the high school. All bathrooms in the elementary and in the '56 wing of the HS will be refurbished – new plumbing, new floors, ceilings, etc. New windows will replace the old; new lights will be put in corridors and classrooms. Once completed, the schools will be the very best in the tri-county area. Can we brag about this or what?

Academically, our students are making every attempt to be their best. The *Performing Arts Academy* students are embarking on new learning ground by using their artistic talents to help them learn more in physics, advanced math, College English, and government. Seventy-percent of our graduates go on to colleges like Syracuse, Fordham, Harvard, and New Paltz, to mention a few. Students in the middle school's single-gender classes are breaking new ground. Their academic grades are better; they feel more positive about themselves, and they are paying closer attention to learning.

Our elementary students are finding their way through the maze of learning how to read and compute. Grants from the *21st Century Community*

Learning Center and the help from thirty other initiatives help us to provide more academic and co-curricular services for our students. The professional development school program, developed through a coalition with *SUNY New Paltz*, enables our staff to be connected with schools of higher learning.

Our schools are clean! Our schools are safe! Our schools are helping the children of this community to be the best that they can be! Life in the Ellenville schools is vibrant and joyful. It spans the academic, social, and athletic spheres of life.

It sounds like we are perfect. Heck, no! We are not! But we want to be, and strive to be, each day. We have a positive attitude! We want you, our customers, to be satisfied with our product – the learning of our children. We want everyone to know that we love what we do and share our enthusiasm with everyone.

Won't you join us? Please do. Call us (647-0100) and let us know what you can do to get involved, or what ideas you may have to share. And check out our website at: www.ecs.k12.ny.us 

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