

Bell Top

39 Reynolds Rd., Troy, NY 12180

June 2020



From the desk of Mr. Mahar

Summer vacation came early this year as schools closed on Monday, June 15th. What a truly unusual 2019-2020 school year we had. We went from learning in school to learning at home. We were all thrust into a new way of learning and I can't be more proud of the Bell Top community. The continued partnership between home and school really shined through. Thank you to all the families, students, faculty, and staff for making this experience as successful as we could.

As we move forward, our school district has formed a school reopening task force that is composed of stakeholders from every aspect of the school district. I am part of this task force and will bring a voice that represents Bell Top. My emphasis will be to implement a safe return for everyone. This is going to be a difficult challenge as we plan for the unknown considering a variety of unique variables. However, I believe by starting to plan early and including many perspectives, we will have a positive, efficient, and safe plan to return back to school in the fall. To stay up to date on coronavirus information regarding the school, please visit the East Greenbush CSD website: <https://egcsd.org/>

Good News - The district budget vote passed. They finalized tallying all the votes on June 17th and we had a record turnout. Thank you for the overwhelming support from our entire community. Here is the link for more information about the budget vote:

<https://egcsd.org/2020/06/17/voters-approve-school-budget-and-bus-purchase-with-record-turnout/>

~Mr. Mahar



Class Configurations

With the passing of the district budget vote we have the green light to communicate our plans for class configurations for the 2020-2021 school year. We are a small, close knit community with a small building capacity. We have been fortunate to have increased our class sections over the past year to support smaller class sizes.

Creating student class lists is a delicate process that is complex and requires team effort. Teachers do not take this process lightly as they are asked to create balanced lists that factor in equitable male/female ratio, academic ability, social-emotional well being, student learning style, and best fits. As many of you are aware, when a request is made to place a child in a specific class, it throws off this process and creates a domino effect that impacts multiple decisions regarding multiple students. I am respectfully asking that families do not request a specific placement. The Bell Top teachers have your child's best interest as their top priority and I ask that you trust the process. We will have 2 combination classes next year. "Research has shown there's no difference in academic achievement between children in split classes versus straight grades" from ([Why Children Might Benefit From a "Combination" Classroom](#))

These are the sections for next year:

- K - 3 sections
- 1st - 2 sections
- 1st/2nd combination - 1 section
- 2nd - 2 sections
- 3rd - 3 sections
- 4th - 2 sections
- 4th/5th combination - 1 section
- 5th - 2 sections

Have a wonderful summer and we will see you in September.