



FULTON IN TOUCH

FULTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

WINTER

2021

Drone Program Takes Flight at G. Ray Bodley High School

Four Fulton City School District staff members received certification under the Federal Aviation Administration's rules for unmanned aircraft systems, known as Part 107, to instruct a newly formed class designed to prepare students for careers that involve drone technology.

Carol Teetsel, Geoff Bertollini, Mike Conners and Dan Mainville received their "drone wings" in February during the district's virtual Board of Education meeting with a goal to help students earn theirs as well.

Mainville, who instructs the elective class of about 20 G. Ray Bodley students, says students are trained using two different aircraft models to become adept at solving mechanical failures and mastering essential piloting skills.

"I wouldn't even call (FCSD) ahead of the curve when it comes to drone technology," Mainville said. "They're on the other side of the globe when it comes to this type of experience for our students."

Students begin their 300-hour course training using SYMA drones, which lack the easy-to-use GPS technology and self-stabilization found on the district's higher end DJI Mavic 2 Pro series drones, so



they are best prepared to respond to worst-case scenarios using critical thinking.

"You have to anticipate all the time that you're going to lose GPS, that you're going to cause an accident, and you have to know how to react when that happens," Mainville said.

Bertollini, who provides technical support for the district, works with other class instructors to provide one-on-one assistance to each student as they navigate the technical and conceptual approaches to drone piloting. Outside the classroom, Bertollini uses drones to market real estate, survey land and take aerial photos of scenery around Oswego County.

Continued inside...



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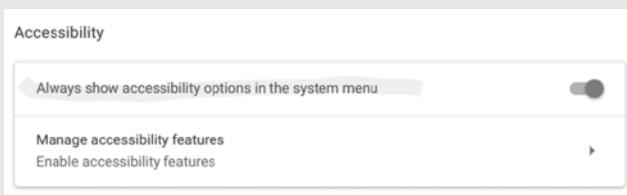
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Tech Corner

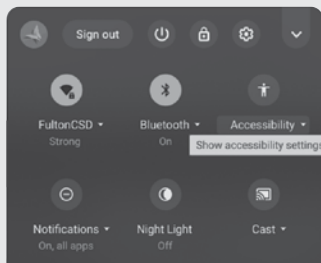
- ✂ Digital Accessibility Settings Are...
- 🕒 A tool your child can use to meet their learning needs.
- ➡ Digital Accessibility is a lifelong skill.
- ➡ All students can benefit from responsible use of digital accessibility.
- 🕒 Explore these settings together as your child finds which technology supports best help them learn.

Chromebooks have many digital accessibility tools built right in. All students, regardless of need, can access and benefit from them. Take some time to explore settings such as Text to Speech, Voice Typing, and even making the mouse look bigger on the screen. If you are having problems hearing your teacher on Google Meet, you can even turn captions on to read and listen to their lessons. To access these accessibility settings, click the clock in the corner of your screen. An option should appear that says "Accessibility." If it does not, open up settings. At the very top of the settings, search for the word "accessibility" to instantly find those settings. Check the box to show accessibility features in the system menu for easier access. Captioning in Google Meet can be turned on directly in Google Meet, and not through these settings.

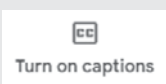
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Continued... Drone Program Takes Flight at G. Ray Bodley High School

He says the opportunity for students to obtain their Part 107 certification opens doors to a variety of occupations, many of which are integrating the latest drone technologies that did not exist just a decade ago.

"Firefighting today uses drone infrared technology to see through smoke," he said, naming a few examples of how drones are used in the 21st century workforce, "You also have the ability in cold weather to see warm objects for search and rescue missions."

Conners, who also works in instructional technology, agrees.

"For me, it's broadened my skillset and I think it's a great resume builder for students in the future," he said.



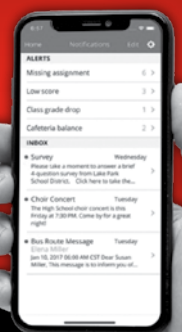
While students in class currently meet twice a week, Mainville is hopeful spring will offer them more opportunities to prepare for the Part 107 license exam and gain more hands-on experience with the aircraft.

"I would love to see the kids spend two or three days outside with small projects and getting used to how to use drones in the real world," he said. "It's not just throwing them up and taking a picture of the sunset."



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G. Ray Bodley Hosts Oswego County Department of Health's Largest-Ever Vaccine Clinic

The Fulton City School District this winter hosted the largest vaccine clinic ever operated by the Oswego County Department of Health through careful planning, training and cooperation between the county agency and school administrators.

Christopher Ells, FCSD's Director of Health, Physical Education and Athletics, worked with county officials to organize a point-of-distribution called a "POD" inside the gymnasium at G. Ray Bodley High School where some 985 COVID-19 vaccines have been distributed since January.

The first public inoculations for COVID-19 at G. Ray Bodley began Jan. 16th with consecutive clinics held every Saturday since for both first-dose and second-dose appointments.

"As far as my role here, I treat it just like a big sporting event going on," Ells said. "We have to make sure there's enough parking, snow is cleared, doors are open and there's a point-of-flow through the gym."

The first and only challenge organizers faced was keeping wait times down for those newly vaccinated who were waiting to schedule second-dose appointments. That issue was quickly resolved through more workers being called in, converting the cafeteria into a temporary holding area and adding a 15-chair column in the gym to accommodate more people while being safely distanced.

"That problem completely disappeared," he said. "We ran so much more efficiently that we were calling people who had a 4 p.m. appointment, asking them if they could come in earlier because we would be done earlier."

While the idea of using the high school gymnasium as a vaccination clinic was met by surprise for many district residents, Ells says behind-the-scenes planning for county POD sites have been in the works for nearly 15 years.

"I went to a training about four years ago where we talked about how we would set up schools as sites," he said. "I work closely with the county Department of Health, helping them supply chairs and tables for our site and making sure everything is in order."

'One District, One Book' Literacy Initiative Returns to FCSD

A popular program for pre-K through sixth-grade students to promote literacy in the home is being revived by the Fulton City School District through generous donations from three area nonprofit organizations.

The One District, One Book program, established through the nonprofit Read to Them, will provide all pre-k through sixth-grade students with the same book – the title of which will remain a secret – along with the opportunity to attend a virtual assembly and participate in interactive workshops with its author.

Heather Witter, FCSD's Director of Literacy and UPK, said staff and teachers are excited to offer the program once again.



"The Read to Them initiative promotes a positive school district community and increases students' literacy skills," she said. "The idea is for families to read the chapters at home together."

District teachers and staff will also record chapters so students have the option of listening as the chapters are read aloud.

The program this year was made possible through donations from the Jim and Juli Boenheim Foundation, Fulton Lions Club and the Fulton Teachers Association.

Books will be delivered March 22 to the homes of remote students while in-person students will receive theirs March 23.

Prioritizing SEL Programs to Maintain Students' Well-Being

The Fulton City School District believes in the need for social-emotional learning to be integrated into the work of every educator and learning environment and, through evidence-based SEL curricula, has adopted successful programs to reach students at each level.

"We are grounded in the five SEL competencies that have been adopted by New York state, so that's really a focus of a lot of the learning," FCSO Director of Student Support Services Elizabeth Tiffany said. "SEL helps students access academic content by building essential social skills, resilience and connections."

New York state's five SEL competencies, established by The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.

Pre-K through eighth-grade students are learning through the Second Step SEL curriculum, established through the Committee for Children nonprofit which "enables a more holistic, flexible approach to SEL." Students in grades nine through 12 are taught using the district's adoption of The Positivity Project and faculty-developed lessons during their Guided bell.

"Fostering positive and meaningful social and school connections remains an important goal," Tiffany said. "During the COVID-19 pandemic, it is critically important to place adult and student wellness first to establish an inclusive, positive, safe and supportive learning environment."

All classes and subject areas can promote social and emotional skills in a variety of ways in addition to dedicated SEL blocks in the instructional day. Teachers used welcoming rituals, engaging practices and

optimistic closure to reinforce learning and create a moment of looking forward to the next day.

Tiffany offers some tips for parents and caregivers to support SEL and wellness:

Self-Care

As adults, we must build in time for our own wellness practices, no matter how small. This might look like journaling, going for a walk, exercising or calling a friend. Much like putting on our own oxygen mask first before putting on a child's, we must take care of ourselves during this stressful time so that we're able to show up for others. If you feel like you don't have time for self-care practices, start by pausing to take a single deep breath - clearing your mind from anything except that breath.

Model the Behavior You Seek

Whether it's apologizing when you're in the wrong or treating others with respect and kindness, children learn a great deal about relationships from observing the behavior of their caregivers and other adults in their lives.

Help Establish Predictable Routines

Routines ground us and provide a sense of safety and security. Even though some students are not attending classes in person, it is helpful to establish a consistent bedtime, wake time and learning space. Try creating a behavior matrix for home by explicitly defining what your family members are expected to do during mealtime, class time, play time, bedtime, etc., in order to be respectful, responsible and safe.

Be an "Emotion Coach"

Label all emotions, both positive and negative, to support the development of

your child's emotion vocabulary. Start by describing the way that you are feeling in different situations and the emotions you think your child is feeling. Acknowledge these feelings by labeling it. Don't just focus on the negative ones, focus on the positive ones too!

Build Empathy

The current situation provides ample opportunities to teach children how to support their peers, the neighbor whose parent lost a job, the classmate who has family members with COVID-19, or the friend who struggles to connect to online classes. We can talk to our children about how this situation affects different people and encourage them to connect with their friend by phone or online. We can teach them how to listen and be supportive. This skill will benefit them throughout their lives.

Find Gratitude

Days can feel long when we don't have all of our usual outlets and activities. Try to find something small to celebrate each day. Celebrate your health, a new day and fresh start, the sun shining or rising temperatures. Journal three daily highlights or share them with each other. Research has indicated that when we recognize what we are grateful for, we develop resilience to the negative events that may be happening in our lives.

Reach Out

If you notice a change in your child's behavior or are looking for additional ways to support your child's social emotional wellness, please contact a member of your school's Student Support Team.

For more information about the district's SEL instruction or supports, you please contact Elizabeth Tiffany at 315-593-5547.

FCSD Launches Livestreamed Athletic Games



The Fulton Red Raiders have a new home in the cloud through a newly launched YouTube channel that features livestreaming and archived modified, junior varsity and varsity games.

Viewers can tune in to the Fulton Communications YouTube page to watch single or multiple games in real time, all of which are captured on a Hudl Focus camera that automatically follows the game wherever it goes.

"The camera will follow the action going up and down the court and you don't need a person to operate it," said Christopher Ells, FCSD's Director of Health, Physical Education and Athletics.

Students and their families can currently catch up on swimming, bowling and basketball games. The district will be adding hockey games as well.

"Some parents have kids on different teams, so they can watch both games side by side," he said. "Obviously parents want to see their kids live, but this is a great alternative."

The addition of streaming games, Ells said, will likely be a permanent addition due to the convenience offered to parents and relatives of students who may not be able to physically attend games.

"This is something that will not go away once COVID ends."

Game schedules can be found at www.schedulegalaxy.com/schools/40 and links to streaming games can be found on the district's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/fultoncityschooldistrict.

Fulton UPK Program

Students who turned 4 by December 1, 2020 are eligible to join a FCSD UPK in-person or virtual class now. Virtual students receive an iPad to complete their work at home. All registered students are also eligible for free food services. Register online at fultoncsd.org or contact Heather Witter, Director of UPK, at 315-593-5782

Who is eligible?

Children are eligible for the 2021-2022 program if they turn 4 years old on or before December 1, 2021 and live within the Fulton City School District.

What are some program features?

- Early Literacy Development
- Physical Development
- Social and Emotional Development



What documentation is needed?

- Original Birth Certificate
- Immunization Records (see NYS Immunization Requirements)
- Proof of Residency (copy of signed lease, utility bill, tax bill)
- Parent/Guardian Driver's License or Photo ID
- Custody Papers (if applicable)
- Latest Report Card or Class Schedule
- Copy of Child's IEP (if the child was receiving special education services in previous district)
- Copy of Child's 504 Plan (if the child was receiving 504 accommodations in previous district)

How can I sign my child up?

Visit fultoncsd.org/register and fill out the online registration form.

Who should I contact for more information?

Heather Witter, Director of Universal Pre-K, at 315.593.5782 or by emailing registrar@fulton.cnyric.org



Fulton City School District

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LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



Dear Fulton City School District Parents, Guardians, and Community Partners,

I hope this correspondence finds you and your families healthy and well! The "2020-2021" school year has been like no other. I want to express my gratitude and appreciation to all of our families, students, faculty,

staff, administrators and community members/partners for your support and flexibility during these uncertain times. The perseverance and commitment to moving forward in our learning community is exemplary. The health data is improving by the week, vaccinations are well underway, and our communities and our lives are moving toward more "normal" in many ways. I truly hope and anticipate that these trends continue so we can achieve our goal of safely returning to "regular" school schedules and programs.

As you may be aware, the FCSD made some adjustments for the third quarter of our school year. There has been an extension of the day at GRB that included adding an instructional period, realignment of daily schedules for students in grades 6-12 to allow for more consistent access to learning opportunities on days when students are remote, and additional time added to the day at the elementary level. We will continue to explore new opportunities in accordance with evolving health guidelines to ensure a safe and high-quality educational experience.

The Capital Improvement Project continues to evolve with sitework 90% completed at Lanigan School and plans for the sitework at the Junior High and Volney Schools to be underway in the spring/early summer of 2021. Work with respect to mechanicals, electrical, plumbing, masonry, windows and doors has been bid and awarded at each of those sites. The scope of the work continues to be monitored, as there have been adjustments made due to increased costs associated with COVID-19. We also have had the architects review the 2015 building condition surveys with specific attention to ventilation and mechanicals, as these are areas at the forefront of our planning during this pandemic. The scope of work for Fairgrieve, Granby and GRB is in the design phase and will be presented to the Board of Education

in the near future and then to the New York State Education Department for approval. Our goal is to ensure priority needs are addressed while efficiently maximizing the funds available in the allocated budget.

The 2021-22 budget process has started, with the needs of our students as the focal point of every decision, in alignment with the FCSD 5-Year Strategic Coherence Plan (SCP). Our SCP outlines the specific goals and action steps necessary to achieve our FCSD mission and vision. To assist in the development of a budget that supports our SCP, meets our students' needs and is responsive to our community, the district has formed a Budget Committee. The committee is composed of parents, community members, faculty, staff and administrators. The role of the Budget Committee is to provide advisory input to the Superintendent and the district's senior leadership team in the development of the 2021-22 budget that will be presented to the BOE. Our goal is to make the process accessible, transparent and provide multiple ways for all stakeholders to share thoughts, questions, concerns and solutions regarding our school district budget.

During the budget process, my team and I will also visit each building's site-based team to provide updates and hear from stakeholders. Community members can always reach out to any school's site-based team members to share their thoughts, as well.

All budget documents can be found on the FCSD website and all meetings (Board and Committee meetings) are being streamed and will be also available as recordings. On the website there will be a form for members of the community to provide input. The form can be completed online or printed to complete in hardcopy. The website will also feature a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section that will be updated on a weekly basis with responses to all budget-related inquiries. Wishing you and your families all the best and be well!

Every Child, Every Day,

Brian T. Pulvino
Superintendent of Schools