

Guilderland CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

WHO'S NEW IN 2026-2027



ALTAMONT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Rachel McCormick

She/Her/Hers

AES Reading Teacher

Rachel grew up on a three-generation dairy farm in Cobleskill and now lives in Altamont. She holds a bachelor's

degree in early childhood education and a master's degree in literacy from The College of Saint Rose. She has taught multiple grades and managed the Altamont Fair. Rachel enjoys reading, crafting, cooking and spending time outdoors. Her favorite quote is, "If your ship doesn't come in, swim out and meet it." —Jonathan Winters

FARNSWORTH MIDDLE SCHOOL



Alyssa Bestler

FMS Aide/Monitor

Alyssa is from Rotterdam and brings experience from Living Resources, a nonprofit human services agency, along with

a passion for supporting students. Outside of work, she enjoys camping, fishing and spending time outdoors.



Brianna Houle

She/Her/Hers

FMS Special Education Teacher

Brianna, originally from Valley Falls and now a resident of Voorheesville, holds a bachelor's

degree in communication sciences and disorders from The College of Saint Rose and a master's degree in childhood and special education from The Sage Colleges. She brings experience from the Cohoes, Albany and Troy City school districts, where she served on a building leadership team and organized autism awareness events. Brianna enjoys reading, running, basketball, cheering for the Yankees and spending time with her children. She is also an identical twin.



Meghan Kirwan

She/Her/Hers

FMS Grade 6 ELA and Social Studies Teacher

Meghan is from Glenville and holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Siena

College and a master's degree in early childhood and childhood education from The College of Saint Rose. She previously taught at Scotia-Glenville's Glen-Worden Elementary and St. Clement's in Saratoga Springs. Meghan enjoys reading, crafts and spending time with her golden retriever, Ruby. Her favorite quote is, "Show me your friends, I'll show you what kind of person you are."



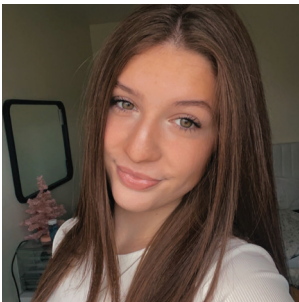
Kayti Marr

She/Her/Hers

FMS Spanish Teacher

Kayti holds a bachelor's degree in Spanish language and literature and a master's degree in secondary education

(Spanish). She has taught in the Bethlehem, Coxsackie-Athens and Discovery College school systems, including in Hong Kong. She founded Peer Mentoring and Student Ambassador programs to support students' social-emotional learning and has taught students from diverse cultural backgrounds. An avid reader and world traveler, Kayti has visited 33 countries. She is a runner, aspiring tennis player and lover of Greek culture and dogs, especially pugs. Her husband is also a teacher, and together they are DINKs (dual income, no kids).



Kendal Luthanen

She/Her/Hers

FMS Aide/Monitor

Kendal is a Guildersland native who attended Guildersland High School and Schenectady County Community College

and is currently studying online at Liberty University. She enjoys reading, karaoke and spending time with her two cats. Kendal is getting married in June 2027.



Amy Miller

She/Her/Hers

FMS French Teacher

Originally from Rochester and now residing in Troy, Amy holds a bachelor's degree in French studies and a master's

degree in secondary foreign language education from the University at Albany. Amy brings extensive experience from several school districts and has led more than 40 international student trips. Officially retired but passionate about teaching, she is excited to continue working part-time, sharing her love of travel, crafts, biking and reading. Her favorite quote is, "To have a second language is to possess a second soul." —Charlemagne

WHO'S NEW IN 2026-2027



Richard Christopher Noel
He/Him/His

FMS English Teacher

Richard holds a bachelor's degree in English literature and a master's degree in literacy.

Richard has taught at Adirondack Academy and Glenmont Job Corps, and has presented at the 2022 "Making Schools Work" Conference. He is dedicated to fostering a culture of literacy and enjoys reading, Dungeons & Dragons, board games, cooking, hiking, playing guitar and trivia. Originally from Burnt Hills, he now resides in Schenectady. He hopes to visit every presidential library and museum in the country. His favorite quote is, "I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live up to what light I have." —Abraham Lincoln



Alexandra Reale
She/Her/Hers

FMS Teaching Assistant

Alexandra earned a bachelor's degree in B-6 education with a concentration in English from The College of Saint Rose and a

master's degree in literacy, all grades from the University at Albany. Her interests include reading, going to the movies, and hosting arts-and-crafts nights with friends. A fun fact: she can crochet, but only with her fingers. She is excited to get to know the GCSD community this year.



Jaquan Pearson
He/Him/His

FMS Teaching Assistant

Jaquan is originally from Ringwood, New Jersey, and now lives in Greenville. He is excited to join the district and looks

forward to being part of the FMS team.



Kaitlyn Riegert
She/Her/Hers

FMS Self-Contained Special Education Teacher (CSP)

Kaitlyn is from Colonie and holds a bachelor's degree in

educational studies and special education. She previously worked at Colonie CSD and is passionate about helping students succeed. Outside the classroom Kaitlyn enjoys movies, television, baseball and Chipotle, and once dreamed of becoming a movie director. Her favorite quote is, "If a child can't learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn." —Ignacio Estrada



Lillian Ritter
She/Her/Hers

FMS Office Assistant

Originally from Dallas, Texas, and now residing in Berne, Lillian holds a bachelor's degree from SUNY Purchase with a dual

major and a minor in playwriting. Her short play premiered at a New Hampshire festival in 2025. She brings a diverse professional background with experience in fitness, cleaning and retail. Lillian enjoys theater, reading, writing and crafting and is known for her positive outlook. Her favorite quote is, "Everything happens for a reason." As a fun fact, she shared that she has a very limited sense of smell.



Guilderland

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



Hanna Starr

She/Her/Hers

FMS Secretary 1

Hanna graduated from Schalmont High School and previously worked for the Department of Corrections and

Community Supervision. Her interests include hiking and playing basketball. A fun fact: she loves Dunkin' Donuts and enjoys spending time with her husband and her beagle, Layla. Her favorite quote is, "It is the little things in life!"



Alyssa Sullivan

She/Her/Hers

FMS Social Worker

Alyssa is from Albany and lives in Guilderland. She holds a bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in

education and a master's degree in social work. She has more than 13 years of experience as a clinical therapist, most recently at Great Range Health Private Practice. Alyssa enjoys spending time outdoors with her two children, her poodle, Otis, and her many chickens. Her favorite quote is, "What good shall I do today?"

Matthew Trimboli

FMS Health Teacher

Matthew earned both a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in physical and health education from Utica University. He was formerly a graduate assistant coach and defensive coordinator for the Utica University men's lacrosse team. His interests include sports, reading and staying active. A fun fact: he has attended two NHL drafts and met many NHL players. His favorite quote is, "Great moments are born from great opportunities." —Herb Brooks



Steffani Wolek

She/Her/Hers

FMS Speech Language Pathologist

Steffani earned a bachelor's degree from Northeastern University and a master's

degree from Northwestern University. She previously worked for Scotia-Glenville CSD, Bay Arenac Intermediate School District in Michigan, and Niles Township District for Special Education in Illinois. Her interests include crocheting, sewing, reading, rowing and curling. Steffani lives in Glenville with her two boxers, Loki and Luna.

GUILDERLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Christy Guldenzopf

She/Her/Hers

GES Custodian

Christy is from Rotterdam and holds a degree in criminal justice from Hudson Valley Community College. She

previously worked at the Schenectady County Public Library. Her interests include reading, running, video games, card collecting and soccer. A fun fact: she has hand-fed an armadillo and petted a penguin. Her favorite quote: "Sic parvis magna. Greatness from small beginnings." —Nathan Drake

WHO'S NEW IN 2026-2027



Dania Dal Pos

She/Her/Hers

GES English as a New Language (ENL) Teacher

Dania earned a bachelor's degree in early childhood

and childhood education from SUNY Cortland and a master's degree in teaching English to speakers of other languages from Siena University. She previously worked as a substitute teacher at Shenendehowa CSD and has experience supporting multilingual learners across multiple elementary grade levels. Her interests include spending time with her golden retriever, Cash, exploring new places, cooking, staying active and making memories with family and friends. A fun fact: she enjoys putting cheese in her hot chocolate. Her favorite quote is, "Wherever you go, go with all your heart." –Confucius



Sarah McCue

She/Her/Hers

GES Art Teacher

Sarah holds a bachelor's degree in digital and studio art from SUNY Oneonta and a master's degree in

art education from The College of Saint Rose. She has experience as a teacher's assistant and as a substitute at several schools, and her students' work has been featured in notable art shows. Originally from Rexford, she enjoys cooking, baking, creating art, skiing and going to the beach. A fun fact: she played ice hockey for 10 years. Her favorite quote: "In being mindful of our actions, we create the opportunity for change."



Eva Zyka

She/Her/Hers

GES Custodian

Originally from Glenmont, Eva has a background working at Albany Medical Center. She enjoys sewing and styling

clothes, and is proud of her Albanian heritage.

GUILDERLAND HIGH SCHOOL



Susanne Foster

She/Her/Hers

GHS Special Education Teaching Assistant

Susanne is from Whitehall and currently lives in Troy. She holds a bachelor's degree

in linguistics and a master's degree in anthropology (linguistics) from the University at Albany. Susanne previously worked as a museum educator and site director at the Fort Edward Historical Association, where she organized scholarship art shows, fundraisers, and produced interactive history programs. Her interests include history, science, language, Dungeons & Dragons, video games, art and Pokémon. A fun fact about Susanne is that she has a betta fish named "Tower of Babel."

LYNNWOOD ELEMENTARY



Heather Mackesey

She/Her/Hers

GHS Special Education Teacher

Heather is from Clifton Park and resides in North Greenbush.

She holds a bachelor's degree

in history and political science and a master's degree in adolescent education. She previously worked at Questar III BOCES. Her interests include puzzles, book club, walking, baking and spending time with her dogs.



Marysa Owings

She/Her/Hers

GHS Office Assistant 1

Marysa earned a medical office diploma and brings experience in office administration, customer service, scheduling

and managing multiple priorities. She previously worked for Victory Homes Lubbock and University Medical Center. Her interests include spending time with family, home decorating and DIY projects, reading, traveling and shopping. A fun fact: Blink-182 is her favorite band and she has seen them perform live several times across the United States. Her favorite quote is, "Kindness costs nothing."



Abigail Donnelly

She/Her/Hers

LES Kindergarten Leave of Absence (LOA) Teacher

Abigail is from Burnt Hills. She holds a Bachelor of Science

in Early Childhood and Childhood Education from Siena University. She has experience as a substitute teacher, cheerleading coach and Montessori school teacher assistant. Abigail has student-taught in kindergarten and fourth grade, with additional field placements in ENL and special education. She enjoys country music, line dancing, arts and crafts, and is excited to join the district.

Ella Kelly

She/Her/Hers

LES Grade 3 Leave of Absence (LOA) Teacher

A Guildersland native, Ella holds a bachelor's degree in early childhood and childhood education from SUNY Cortland. She previously worked as a building substitute in Albany School District and as an assistant teacher at Colonie Community Daycare Center. Ella enjoys reading, listening to music and spending time with friends. Her favorite quote is: "If you're happy doing what you're doing, then nobody can tell you you're not successful." —Harry Styles

WHO'S NEW IN 2026-2027



Julia Lettrick

She/Her/Hers

LES Grade 1 Teacher

Julia is originally from East Greenbush and now lives in Troy. She holds a master's degree in childhood education and a bachelor's degree in early childhood and childhood education.



Morgan Phillips

She/Her/Hers

LES Grade 1 Teacher

Morgan earned a bachelor's degree in education science from the University of Florida and a master's degree in early childhood and childhood education from The College of Saint Rose. She previously served in long-term fourth-grade teaching assignments at GES and PBES. Her interests include working out, training for HYROX fitness competitions, international travel, playing co-ed softball and spending time with family and friends. Her first full year of teaching was alongside the teacher who inspired her to pursue a career in education. Her favorite quote is, "Everything happens for a reason." She is excited to give back to the district and community where she grew up.

WESTMERE ELEMENTARY



Morgan Curtis

She/Her/Hers

WES Building Substitute

Morgan earned a bachelor's degree in fine arts and a master's degree in elementary education (grades 1-6). She previously worked at Hudson Falls CSD, Maurices, Texas Roadhouse, New Meadow and WSWHE BOCES. Morgan enjoys art, reading, crafts and games. A fun fact: She graduated high school with only 16 classmates. Her favorite quote is, "Every flower must grow through dirt." She is excited to join the district.



Autumn Wafer

She/Her/Hers

WES Grade 2 Teacher

Autumn earned a bachelor's degree in childhood education (grades 1-6) and has experience teaching fifth grade at Hillside Elementary School in Niskayuna and first grade at Chango Elementary in Shenendehowa. Autumn enjoys baking and traveling with her family. A fun fact: Autumn recently completed her reign as Miss New York (Upstate) with National American Miss.

SERVING ACROSS THE DISTRICT



Len Kies

Interim Director of PE, Health, and Athletics

Len is the interim director of physical education, health and athletics for the district.

With a background in business economics and education from SUNY Oneonta and Long Island University, he has held leadership roles in athletics and wellness at several school districts. His achievements include being named the Capital Area School Development Association's Director of Athletics of the Year in 2026 and the New York State Athletic Administrators Association's Athletic Administrator of the Year in 2019. Len enjoys fitness, tennis, college football, baseball, cooking and spending time with family. A fun fact: He played Division I baseball at St. John's University and had a hit off future MLB Hall of Famer Billy Wagner. His favorite quote is, "Don't worry about those things that you cannot control."



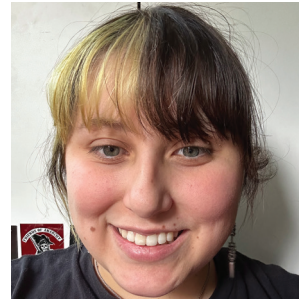
Ruby Siegel

She/Her/Hers

School Psychologist

Ruby joins GCSD as a school psychologist serving multiple buildings. Originally from Scarsdale and now living in Albany, she holds

a bachelor's degree in human development, a bachelor's degree in psychology, a master's degree in educational psychology and methodology, and a Certificate of Advanced Study in school psychology. Previously, she worked as a school psychologist in the Troy CSD. Ruby enjoys outdoor activities, baking, art and DIY projects and is a twin. Her favorite quote is, "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." —Maya Angelou



Jasmine Weiskopf

They/Them/Theirs

Art Teacher assigned to multiple buildings

Jasmine is from Syracuse and currently lives in Troy.

They hold a bachelor's degree in art education, a bachelor's degree in art history and a master's degree in art education from Nazareth University. Jasmine previously worked in the Rochester City and Johnson City school districts and led a mural club and middle school dance program. Their interests include hiking, camping, cooking and traveling. A fun fact: Their cat and rabbit are best friends. Their favorite quote is, "Creativity takes courage." —Henri Matisse

ALSO WELCOME:

Adriana Bana, GES Teacher Aide/Monitor

Ioana Cristea, FMS Teaching Assistant

Robert DeAngelis, GHS Teacher Aide/Monitor

Christa Gitto, GES Teaching Assistant

Rhonda Lipscomb, FMS Teacher Aide/Monitor

Madailein Murphy, WES Elementary Education Teacher

Mercedes Puran, FMS Special Education Teacher

Tiffany Salisbury, WES English Teacher

Edward Smith, LES Elementary Lead Cook

Jeanna Stapleton, FMS Library Media Science Teacher

Dennis Turner, FMS Science Teacher

Regina Valentino, FMS Registered Nurse

Who's New is published by the Guildersland Central School District in cooperation with the Capital Region BOCES Engagement & Development Service. Information for the brochure is compiled in mid-August, and new staff profiled reflect those individuals who were hired for the 2026 school year on or before Aug. 10, 2026.

Printed August 2026.