



A Message From The Superintendent



First of all, I want to thank the Canastota school community for your overwhelming support of the school during our first two months, as we continue to operate under unprecedented circumstances. Staff and students did a terrific job adjusting on the fly to deal with that curveball. What enabled us to have a safe start this year is what will continue to keep us safe and minimize the potential spread of COVID – strict adherence to distancing protocols, the wearing of masks, frequent sanitizing throughout our facilities, and a focus on proper daily health screenings.

We were intentionally very cautious in our opening of the new school year given the fact that we were faced with so many unknowns. We utilized a hybrid schedule to ensure that our classrooms, busses and hallways were not overcrowded while we established our distancing protocols. I believe that this strategy paid off. Once we had a stronger understanding of the process, we were ready to phase in some schedule modifications that will hopefully assist our students.

We were very excited to welcome our K-3 students - who had been operating in a hybrid instructional model - back to school five days a week beginning on Monday, October 26. Students currently in a fully remote schedule will remain in a fully remote schedule. We are extremely pleased to be offering this daily in-person schedule to our students, and I know many of our families are as well. The next phase of our reopening plan includes the return of students in grades 4-6 at Roberts Street Elementary School to a 5 day per week schedule starting on Monday, November 16.

We fully understand that the return of our K-6 students does not mean a return to normal. In fact, all social distancing, wearing of masks, intensive cleaning and disinfecting of facilities and daily health screenings will continue into the foreseeable future. We may not be back to normal for some time, but having our students back to school on a more frequent basis is a sign that we are moving in the right direction.

Last week, I alluded to the fact that the instructional schedule in each of our four buildings was being evaluated, with the idea of looking for opportunities to allow more students to return to a five day per week in-school schedule over the course of time. Again, any schedule modifications under consideration will include the same strict social distancing standards that we've used since the beginning of the year.

Finally, I'd like to update you on our search for the new South Side Elementary School principal. As many of you already know, Mr. Robert Taube made the decision to return to the classroom and accepted a teaching position in another district. We wish him well. Upon Mr. Taube's departure,



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SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY

In mid-October, the Lenox Town Clerk and the Village of Canastota shared a post on their Facebook pages that their free food & toiletry pantries were running low on supplies. Our district shared that news on its own Facebook page and the CCSD community quickly mobilized to make a difference.

Within 24 hours of the initial post, the school community contributed three large boxes of health and beauty supplies for the Canastota Caring Cupboard effort.

RSES Principal Mike Faustino and JSHS Principal Jay Altobello went around to the four cupboard locations to divide up the items and help restock the shelves.

Donations to the Caring Cupboard are always accepted. The four locations are: the village municipal building, Zems, Debrucques and Stoneleigh Apts.



Clifford Continues PSES Visits



Peterboro Street's pal Clifford is back this year and he remembered his mask!

Clifford the Big Red Dog is once again helping PSES students practice positive and kind behaviors through his Big Ideas program. Big Ideas aims to support children as they develop

an understanding that their actions can affect others and help build a more positive school climate.

K-3 Social Worker Amelia Berezein said Clifford has been part of the PSES family for more than 10 years, when the school began using the Big Ideas program building-wide.

"The pre-k classes were already using Clifford books and lessons at the time, and he is such a well-known character," she said.

The PBIS committee took the 10 Big Ideas and assigned one idea to each month, working across classrooms and grade levels to focus on that concept through activities, books, vocabulary, lessons and sayings to help students remember the idea.

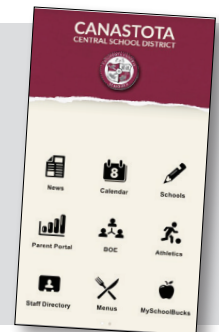
"Having everyone use the same terminology has helped the building a great deal," Berezein said.

A few years ago, the school PTA purchased a Clifford costume to allow a live visit from The Big Red Dog at a monthly Morning Program to introduce each new idea. This year, there haven't been school-wide assemblies, but Clifford has been making videos to launch each month's idea to continue the school's character education work.



DOWNLOAD OUR MOBILE APP

Canastota's new mobile app is available in the Apple and Android stores. The free app gives users quick access to the most popular information from our website. Users can also customize the app to receive news, building and School Messenger alerts from the district.



Raider Wednesdays Increase Student Engagement

RSES is making the most of its hybrid learning schedule by inviting students into school for Raider Wednesdays, a day devoted to enhancing school climate, increasing student engagement, and boosting academic skills.

At the start of the school year, staff extended an invitation to students they believed would benefit most from the program, which began in late September. About 100 students in grades 4-6 are participating in leadership development, special area coursework, and academically-focused programming led by community partners.

“At each grade level, we identified some global needs across the board where we could focus our efforts and build capacity,” RSES Principal Mike Faustino said. “The feedback from students and parents has been overwhelmingly positive. They are really engaged in the process.”

Raider Wednesdays builds upon a school-wide initiative launched last year to expand our afterschool student programming and build strategic community partnerships as one way to increase student engagement and attendance. The school successfully hosted 10 different afterschool clubs, each with a different focus and held on a different day of the week, before the pandemic closed schools. With afterschool programming on hold this year, Faustino said the Raider Wednesday initiative is a way to continue those student engagement efforts during the hybrid learning phase while maintaining health and safety protocols.

“For a lot of kids, it’s a nice break to be engaged in something outside of academics while they’re at school, to have outlets to connect with each other around timely topics,” Faustino said.

Participating students have a full school day on Wednesdays, including a morning Restorative Circle to practice positive behavior techniques and morning sessions focused on academic support in ELA, Math and Writing. The day also includes physical education, art, music, library, and a personal safety curriculum called “Think First, Stay Safe,” aimed at raising awareness of child victimization.

The remainder of the day includes sessions with community partners, such as leadership consultant Otis Jennings, the Canastota Public Library, and the Great Swamp Conservancy. Enrichment-style lessons are tied into key academic focus areas – 4th grade social studies, 5th grade science, and 6th grade research and exploration, for example – to help reinforce the curriculum through a hands-on, whole child approach. Building partnerships was one of the goals of RSES’s school improvement plan, and the building leadership team decided to focus more heavily on local partnerships to help students become better connected to the Canastota community.

RSES is set to return to a five day per week instructional schedule in November, but the school is committed to continuing these programs throughout the week.

“We are fiercely committed to community-based programming and we will find creative ways to maintain this positive momentum,” Faustino said.



MEET THE SSES INTERIM PRINCIPAL



Welcome to Sharon Kirch, who is serving as interim principal at South Side Elementary School while the district searches for a permanent principal.

Kirch may be a familiar face to some of our families. She served as an interim assistant principal at SSES and PSES in 2018.

Before her retirement, she spent 24 years in the Camden school district as an elementary principal, an elementary-level curriculum coordinator, and an elementary school teacher.

NEW DISTRICT LEADERSHIP ROLES

Some familiar faces are now serving the district in new roles.

Christopher Clancy

Assistant Superintendent for Instruction & Special Programs

Karen Henner

Director of Instructional Support Services

Kathie Palladino

Assistant Director of Special Programs

Cecile Retrosi

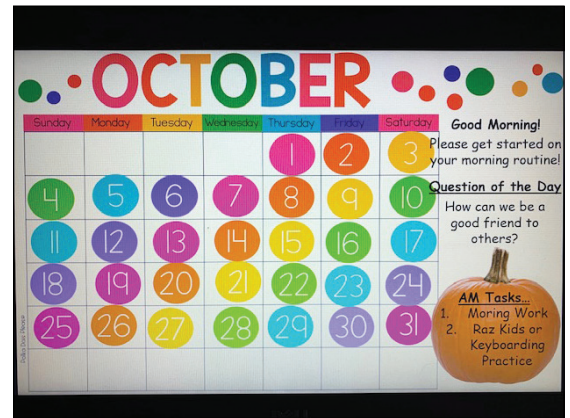
Instructional Technology Coach

Ellen Byrnes

Literacy Coach

Morning Meeting Focuses On Kindness

Morning Meeting is a staple of many elementary schools, but SSES teacher Natalie Lambertson is infusing some new elements into hers this year. Each morning, her second graders discuss a daily question and compliment each other to help create a welcoming environment where everyone feels comfortable showing kindness.



“As the teacher, I set the tone for them and for this class, and I want that to always be positive,” Lambertson said. “I try to do it in a way that allows conversation among the students, not just with me, because I want them to feel like this is a family and be comfortable with each other.”

Questions focus on feelings, citizenship and character traits – for example, how can you demonstrate responsibility, or share a time you were honest even though it was hard.

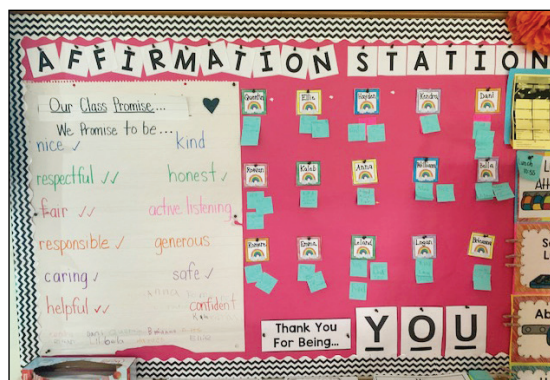
“It’s really amazing to hear the examples they come up with and how much they understand what we’re doing,” she said.

If students are not comfortable responding to a particular question, Lambertson encourages students to “pass” rather than saying nothing to help them build courage for another opportunity to speak in front of the class.

During the Morning Meeting, she also leads a Compliment Circle for students to commend each other. At any time, though, she offers students an Affirmation Station, which allows them to post notes and compliments for each other on a display wall.

Some of the new ideas she is using this year were born out of a regional Capturing Kids Hearts workshop that she attended last fall through MOBOCES. That training focuses on strategies to improve student engagement and social-emotional learning, which then help support academic achievement.

Lambertson said she hopes the discussions they have each morning will carry over to other parts of their day, to help students communicate better with each other and with adults during academic and social times.



“We really try to focus on the idea that just because someone has a different opinion or is somehow different than you, you can disagree respectfully and get along once this is done,” she said. “We can always treat each other with kindness and we can always think about someone else’s feelings.”

JSHS Launches SEL Team

The JSHS has developed a new Social Emotional Learning Team to lead a more focused effort on addressing the growing health and wellness needs of students and staff.

The SEL Team includes guidance counselors, general education teachers, special education teachers and school psychologists. The team's work is aligned with New York State SEL Standards and takes into account the stressors and mental needs of the entire school community. The team has already begun work on developing a plan.

"When students develop skills in which to cope with these new stressors in our everyday lives, they can become more productive and successful in their educational lives too," Art Teacher and Administrative Intern Kristie Boisen said.



Some examples include healthy ways to reduce stress like listening to music or taking a walk outside to mindfulness techniques.

"We look forward to focusing on ways to reduce stress and create calmness in the lives of our students, because we truly care about their well-being," Boisen said.

PSES, SSES STUDENTS USE MUSIC BAGS



Over the summer, K-3 music teacher Meghann Piciucco developed an Amazon Wish List and sought out donations from friends, family and neighbors to create 400 individual student music bags to use in her classes this year! Bags have rhythm sticks, an egg shaker, a pool noodle scrapper, a scarf for movement activities, and a dry erase marker for composition activities.

Badges Promote Skills & Experiential Learning

How can Digital Badge Credentials help students with their future goals? Students have skills and achievements beyond what shows up on their report cards. Digital Badge Credentials are one way that the Canastota Central School District can provide students with credentials that recognize a student's strengths and accomplishments. Students will have the opportunity to achieve badges in various skill areas, community service, and work-based learning.

Digital Badges provide the evidence of what a student has accomplished, and they will become a part of students' resumes and portfolios. The badges provide a more detailed view of a student's learning journey and visually represent a student's achievements. Employers and colleges look favorably on this additional credential.

The district is in the process of designing badge areas, criteria and objectives. Upon completion of the initial skills-based badges, district leaders will seek further input from the area business community to design industry-specific badges. More information will be coming about this exciting new initiative.



Sample badges

ART ON DISPLAY!

Congratulations to the 13 CHS students whose art work is on display in the district Board Room! They are students of art teachers Kristie Boisen and Denise Whalen.

The student artists (with grade) whose work is on display:

Sophia Bolton, 11

Brooke Congden, 10

Ethan Debrucque, 12

Ella DiVeronica, 10

Kendra Evans, 12

Jade Garcia, 12

Nick Parevese, 10

Ezekiel Percival, 11

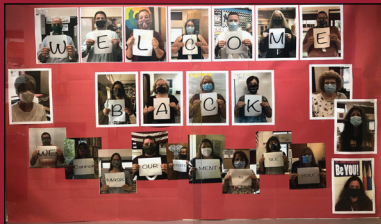
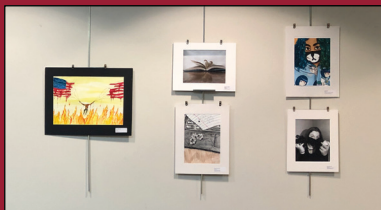
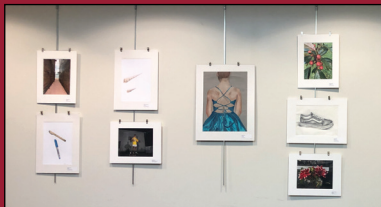
Clay Roberts, 10

Breeah Shaw, 10

Keifer Shortell, 11

Gloriana Stumpff, 10

Harrison VanLone, 10



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Superintendent's Message

the district embarked on an aggressive search for the new leader of South Side Elementary School. We received 33 applications for the position, which demonstrates that this is a very appealing job to many educational leaders. Throughout the month of October, the search process has unfolded, including several rounds of interviews. A key component of the search was stakeholder interviews, including interview teams of teachers, support staff, parents and administrators. As I write this update, we are nearing the end of the process and anticipate the appointment of our new principal at the November 10 Board meeting. Stay tuned for an announcement!

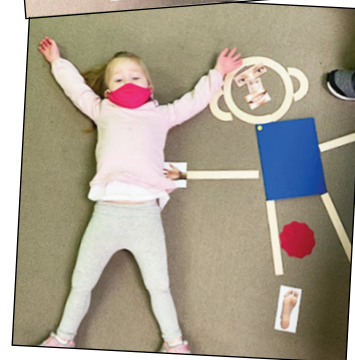
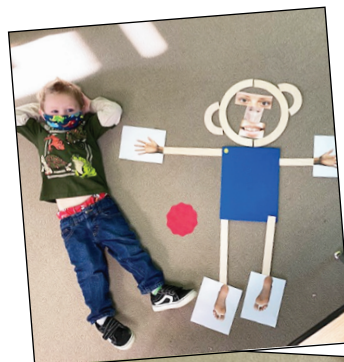
Once again, I'd like to thank our entire school community for your unwavering support during this challenging time. Despite the obstacles we face, we are still moving forward with numerous initiatives that will position us to be the premier school district in our region in the years to come. In the next newsletter, I look forward to sharing with you some of these exciting projects. Until then, stay strong, stay healthy, and go Raiders!

Sincerely,

Shawn Bissetta, Superintendent

Look What We're Doing in Pre-K!

Pre-kindergarten students are off and running this year, using hands-on learning and play to explore topics like body parts, nursery rhymes, fire safety, feeling, routines and plant science!



Left side: After listening to a song through the *Handwriting Without Tears* program, students create their own Mat Man collages using body part photos and shapes.

Above: Students explore pumpkins by listening to a story and examining the insides, comparing and contrasting pumpkin seeds and apple seeds.

CHS Grad Earns National Art Award



Sara Shaver, a 2020 graduate of Canastota High School, earned a National Medal in this year's Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, a nationwide showcase of outstanding student art and writing. The award, a National Silver Medal in Painting for "Feet in the North Sky," places Sara among the top 1 percent of student artists in the country.

"This is an amazing honor and accomplishment, and one that is very rare to receive," CHS Art Teacher Kristie Boisen said.

Boisen said she believes Sara is the first Canastota student to be recognized at the national level in the annual Scholastic Art and Writing Awards competition. A number of student artists from Canastota have been recognized each year at the regional level and have had their work on display at Onondaga Community College.

This past winter, Sara received regional awards for four of her pieces, including a Gold Key for "Feet in the North Sky." Regional Gold Key pieces qualify for national consideration.

Just 3,000 student works were recognized at the national level this year, and only 124 of them were in New York State. Sara was one of 24 New York honorees in the Painting category.

Boisen also received a certificate of recognition for her role as an educator and mentor to Sara.

Sara said Boisen's art classes helped spark her passion for art, particularly painting, and she was excited to receive such a big recognition. Sara now attends SUNY Potsdam, studying environmental science and fine arts.

TECRAID Named Firm of the Year

The 2019-20 CHS Entrepreneurship Class, taught by Business Teacher Bob Esposito, was named 2019-20 Northeast Region Firm of the Year in the annual Virtual Enterprise program.



Each year, the class runs a virtual business called TECRAID to gain hands-on experience in business operations and development. The Virtual Enterprise program recognized the CHS team for their hard work and dedication, which continued throughout the spring school closure!

The team is pictured here in February 2020 at the Rochester trade show.

CONGRATS TO OUR 2020 COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS!

Matthew Carnevale - SUNY Oswego
Dean's Scholarship, Great Lakers
Scholarship

Skyler Donley - Finger Lakes
Community College Hospitality
Scholarship

Gabrielle Edwards - Cazenovia
College Founders Scholarship

Brett Gustin - Syracuse University
Valedictorian Scholarship

Kyle Hale - Cobleskill College
Destination Scholarship

Andrew Marshall - College
of Brockport Green & Gold
Scholarship

Greg Olden - American
International College

Hayley Patane - Cazenovia College
Founder's Scholarship

Alyse Stockbridge - Siena College
Presidents Award, St. Francis
Award

Alexus Stout - LeMoyne College

Nicholas Weber - Utica College

Cassidy Winchell - Morrisville
State College

Crystal VanOrnam - Gateway
Community College Full Tuition
Scholarship



district

administration

Mr. Shawn Bissetta
Superintendent

Mr. Christopher Clancy
Assistant Superintendent for
Instruction & Special Programs

Mr. Nicholas Panuccio Jr.
Executive Director of Finance
& Operations

Mr. Jay Altobello
Jr./Sr. High School Principal

Mr. Andrew Kennedy
Jr./Sr. High School
Assistant Principal

Mr. Stanley Congden
Athletic Director & Jr./Sr. High
School Assistant Principal

Mr. Michael Faustino
Roberts Street Elementary
School Principal

Ms. Jennifer Carnahan
Peterboro Street Elementary
School Principal

Ms. Sharon Kirch
South Side Elementary
School Principal (Interim)

Ms. Cynthia Clark
Transportation Supervisor

Mr. Nick Campbell
Facilities Leader

Ms. Kathie Palladino
Assistant Director of Special Programs

Ms. Karen Henner
Instructional Support Services Director

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education

Mr. Bill Haddad
President

Mr. Loran Crosby
Vice President

Mr. Timothy Bazan
Mr. Wesley Hood
Ms. Deborah New
Ms. Kathleen Niles
Ms. Tracey Quinn

Foundation Supports School Efforts

The new Engage Canastota Educational Foundation has met the minimum funding level to formally establish a charitable fund through the Central New York Community Foundation as a way to support scholastic efforts outside of the district's budget.

The ECEF launched in July 2020 with a community appeal for donations to reach \$10,000, the amount the Community Foundation has set as the minimum to maintain a fund there. In less than two months, Canastota community members and alumni donated enough to formally establish the fund. These donations included a \$5,000 contribution from a single donor to support the foundation's mission.

"We're grateful and honored to see how much support we have in this community," ECEF Board President Donald New said. "This is a community that has always believed in and supported education and we're thrilled at how quickly this initiative has taken off."

During the fundraising period, the ECEF Board of Directors named its slate of officers and set up its operating structure. In addition to New as president, officers include: Doug Holdridge as vice president, Liz Garofalo as secretary, and Pat Powers as treasurer. It also established seven subcommittees: Alumni Relations, Application Review, Community Relations, Finance, Legal, Project and Event Planning, and Student Engagement.

Members of the community who are interested in serving on any of those committees are invited to contact the foundation to discuss how to get involved.

Now that the fund has been established, ECEF leaders continue to seek contributions to support "creative extras" that may not otherwise be funded – supplies for a unique classroom project or a student club competing in a national event, for example.

Anyone wishing to make a donation can visit the district website for details.



Canastota CSD

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