

From the Superintendent

I hope everyone is doing well as we all try to navigate through this unprecedented time. I'd like to thank our entire school community for the tremendous support that you have extended to our staff and students during the Coronavirus Pandemic. While we all struggle to adjust to the new environment and manage our daily schedules and obligations, we are simultaneously needing to make plans for the future of the district. My comments for this update will address the following two primary concerns:

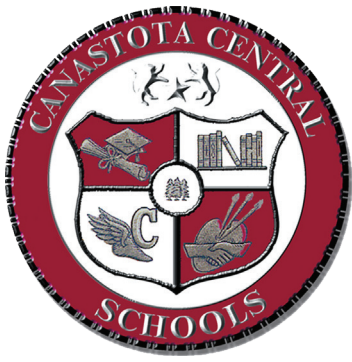
- 1) The school's response to the current pandemic
- 2) The school's plan for the future of education in Canastota

There are several important aspects of our response to the pandemic that I'd like to highlight. First and foremost, the school nutrition program continues to move forward in a positive way. Since the school shutdown, approximately 670 students are receiving meals on a daily basis. We are providing both breakfast and lunch seven days a week for any student who would like to receive meals (all students are eligible for the meal program, no exclusions). Our staff continue to do a great job making sure that the nutritional needs of our students are met.

Almost overnight, school instructional plans had to look dramatically different as a result of the pandemic. In response to these changes, we've initiated several steps to ensure the best experience possible for our students as they continue to learn in a non-traditional format. Instructional materials have been provided electronically and in paper form where necessary for all students K-12, and are distributed on a pre-determined, frequently publicized schedule. In addition to regular instructional interaction with teachers (through individual and whole class virtual meetings), every student/family is contacted by staff members on a weekly basis to determine how the remote learning plan is working. Wellness checks (in conjunction with our School Resource Officer) are conducted in cases where students/parents have not been communicating/engaging in the remote learning framework. We realize this unprecedented challenge has caused a great deal of disruption to the normal educational process and encourage our families to reach out to teachers, counselors and administrators by phone or e-mail if they are in need of additional assistance. Our comprehensive plan for remote learning, the "Continuity of Instruction" plan, is posted on our website for your reference.

A wide range of end-of-year celebrations have obviously been impacted by the pandemic. Each of these events is being evaluated on a case by case basis that takes into account all relevant factors. All of our decisions will be impacted by local/state requirements in place at the specific time of the event. Our plan is to stick to the dates and times already established on the calendar, and we'll specify the exact plan of what the ceremony will look like as the dates approach and/or the applicable regulations have been clarified. Decisions about awards night, graduation and moving up ceremonies will all be made at least one week in advance of the scheduled event, and the format will be widely publicized throughout all of our normal communication channels. A special tribute to graduating seniors is scheduled to air on CNY Central's CW 6 at 7:30 pm on Thursday, June 25th. Please spread the word, and tune in for this tribute to the class of 2020. In order to keep our school community fully informed, we have initiated a weekly video update that outlines key events and information impacting the district. Please check out this new source of information for regular updates.

Now, let's turn our attention to the future of Canastota schools. We, like many other districts,



Striving for Excellence
Canastota

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HONORS GROUP

This year's Honors Group includes 30 additional students with a weighted overall GPA of 89.5 or better. We are so proud!

Natasha Austin
Isabella Barry
Matthew Carnevale
Emily Case
Skyler Donley
Katlyn Dupre
Nicholas Engle
Benjamin Evans
Nicholas Fox
Natalie Freund
Samantha Haddad
Angel Hall
Joshua Heckerman
Alexis Hiltbrand
Jenna Hyde
Mikaela Klenotiz
Eden LaRonde
Michele LaRue
Andrew Marshall
Audrey Mascareno
Gracie Morris
Abby O'Connell
Hayley Patane
Rebecca Popple
Sara Shaver
Payten Shirley
Alyse Stockbridge
Alexus Stout
Abigail Timmins
Nicholas Weber



Congrats to Our Top Seniors!



Seniors Brett Gustin and Carly Cashel have earned the top two spots in the Class of 2020 and will lead their classmates into graduation.

Valedictorian Brett Gustin has been among the top four students for all four years of high school and has consistently appeared on the High Honor Roll. He served as president of National Junior Honor Society in 9th grade and after two years as a member of National Honor Society, he became president of that club as a senior. He is also a member of Science Olympiad, Science Club and Athletics.

Brett is active in the school's music program, playing the trumpet and drums in Jazz Band and playing drums for two years as the only student performer in the high school musical's Pit Band alongside adult musicians. He is also a member of the basketball, baseball and track teams. Brett is a certified lifeguard and water safety instructor and has worked at the Canastota Municipal Pool since 2017. He also volunteers for Special Olympics, Optimist Youth Basketball and St. Agatha's Church. Brett plans to attend Syracuse University to study sports analytics.

He is the son of Donna and Kyle Gustin.

Salutatorian Carly Cashel has also been actively involved in academic and extracurricular activities. She has been on the High Honor Roll consistently since 2014, and she has served as vice president of both National Junior Honor Society and National Honor Society for a total of five years. During high school, she has participated in FBLA, Art Club, the Drama Club backstage crew, History Club and Youth Leadership Team. She has served as Student Government vice president for the past four years, attended the HOBY Leadership Conference in 2018, and worked as a bank teller at the student-run branch of Rome Teachers Federal Credit Union for the 2016-17 school year.

Carly plays basketball and softball and has also previously participated in field hockey, tennis and AAU basketball. She works during the summer at Rogue's Roost Golf Course and babysits year-round. Carly plans to study mechanical engineering at either Clarkson University or Syracuse University.

She is the daughter of Cathy and John Cashel.

Budget & Board Vote Information

Please refer to the district website, www.canastotacsd.org/our-district/business_office for information about the June 9 budget and school board vote (mail-in absentee ballot only) and for this year's budget documents. Our budget hearing will be held virtually on May 28 at 6 p.m. You can reach the District Office at 315-697-2025 with questions.

CCSD Responds To COVID-19

Elementary Specials Teachers Create YouTube Lessons



Even from home, K-3 students are still getting their weekly dose of “specials” – including a series of fun videos and recorded lessons on the district’s YouTube channel.

The music, art, physical education and library teachers created a joint Google Classroom for PSES/SSES students to maintain instruction during the closure. In addition to posting grade-level assignments and activity suggestions, the teachers are recording themselves working on activities that use things commonly found around the house – pencils, chalk, plastic cups, rice.

“You don’t need fancy supplies to make art - gather what you have so we can start creating,” art teacher Melissa Palkovic said. Her lessons have focused on drawing tutorials. But Palkovic said she is mostly interested in getting students interested in art, breaking down the steps to make art more accessible, and creating something that families can do together on their own time.

The K-3 PE team has also taken a family approach to their videos - ways the whole family can stay active together with little or no equipment. Activities have included an exercise egg hunt for Easter, math and movement using sidewalk chalk, and nutrition lessons in the kitchen.

Music teacher Meghann Woodruff has tried to structure the videos in a similar format to her in-school classes, with a hello song, rhythm/melody challenge, song and activity.

“I thought my students would be familiar with it and hop on board,” she said. “The more consistency the better.”

She has tried to incorporate music-making lessons and skills demonstrations, as well as some fun activities for students, like making rain sticks and singing to Freddy the Frog. She encourages students and families to send in photos, videos and recordings of themselves singing songs from class, creating melodies and rhythms, and talking about instruments.

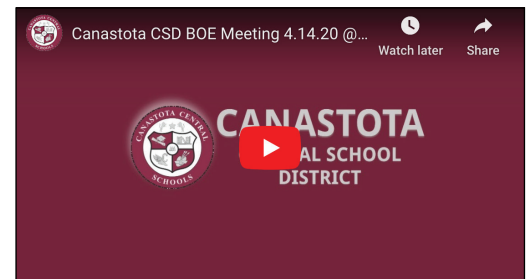
French Students Interview Musician

JSHS Foreign Language teacher Diane Travers had to cancel a large-scale French concert she was planning to hold in March at CHS for students from multiple schools in the region. But she worked with Canadian singer Etienne to bring her students a unique virtual language experience. Instead of touring during the COVID-19 outbreak, Etienne and his band, Nous, streamed videos of concerts and interacted virtually with students, including hosting a worldwide live Kahoot game.



Students conducted three live interviews with him to practice their speaking and listening skills, and they presented a writing assignment in French based on what they learned.

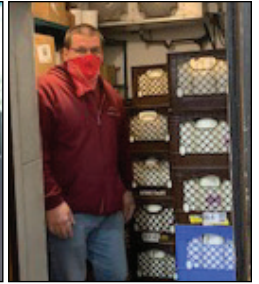
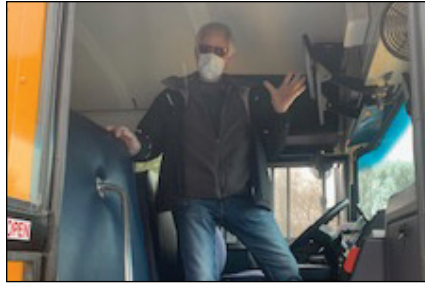
BOE Meets Virtually



The Board of Education moved to virtual meetings to continue conducting district business and provide public access. Meetings were recorded and closed captioned for greater accessibility.

CCSD Responds To COVID-19

Cafeteria, Transportation Teams Support Families



Our amazing cafeteria team has prepared, packaged and distributed more than 66,000 breakfasts and lunches since schools closed in March to help ensure that district students had regular access to food! A huge thank you not only to our food service workers but also to our bus drivers and attendants. In addition to delivering meals to families outside the school walking zone, they brought work packets out to homes and helped pickup and deliver Chromebooks that needed repairs and maintenance!

Shout Out To Our Facilities Team

The Facilities team worked hard throughout the closure to continue thoroughly cleaning and disinfecting work in all schools as well as keeping up with maintenance and repair work on buildings and grounds. They have begun working on some summer projects, including painting, plumbing, replacing lighting and heating valves and general landscaping.

Many thanks to: Head Custodian Dominick Perretta; cleaners Lisa Vanderhoff, Richard Palmer, Sue Doria, Cory Robertson, Phil Anson, Laurene Nourse, Vicky Truax, Sam Bruno, Donna Woodard, Tammy Bayne, and Floyd Smith; maintenance and grounds workers Tim Meyers, Pat Foran, Richard Mitchell and Reuben Pluff; and Facilities Director Nick Campbell for all of their work.

Staff Continue Creating Raider News

When schools closed, two JSBS staff members found a way to keep Raider News going.

Science teacher Erin Tucci and librarian Amanda Sgroi worked each week to solicit school and community news submissions and edit them together into an uplifting, morale-boosting weekly video. Each Friday, the video was emailed to all Canastota students and staff, and occasionally shared over social media - to thousands of community members eager to see each other, even if only virtually.

Sgroi said she was pleasantly surprised at how well-received the videos were.

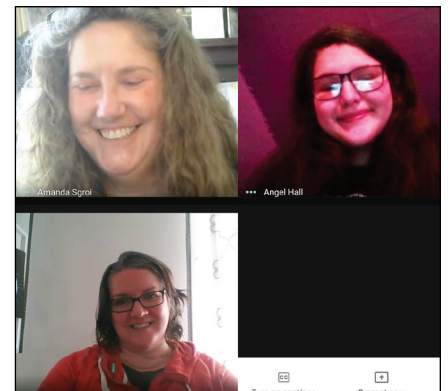
"I think people really wanted that consistency of something every Friday," she said. "We continued the videos to keep everyone connected, let students know we're still here for them - maybe not hovering over their shoulder, but we're here in spirit."

Tucci and Sgroi launched the first episode of Raider News in February, with technical support from Chris Clancy and Cecile Retrosi. CHS senior Angel Hall and freshman Alex Hoff led the reporting and editing efforts, creating news segments on sports, clubs, fundraisers, class projects and student achievements.

Eventually, Tucci and Sgroi said they hope to expand Raider News into a class, a club or live morning announcements.

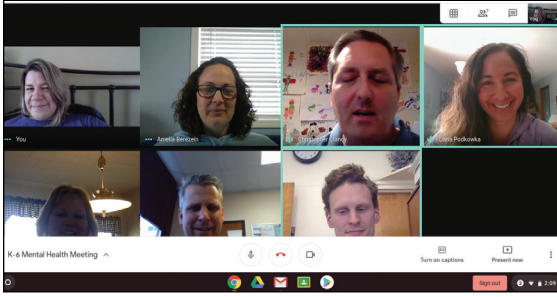
Tucci said the submissions have gotten more meaningful, engaging and creative. In addition to school-related news, more submissions have had a social-emotional focus.

"One of the biggest concerns right now is mental health," she said. "Anyway we can think of to connect with people, to tell them we're thinking of them, we love them, we're proud of their efforts - that's what this is for."



CCSD Responds To COVID-19

Mental Health Team Sees Increased Needs



The CCSD mental health team has been working since schools closed in March to maintain their connection to the social-emotional well-being of the entire school community.

At the elementary level, social workers Amelia Berezein and Dana Podkowka have been connecting with students and families weekly by phone, email and videoconferencing.

“It has been less about traditional ‘counseling,’” they said. “It is more about providing a check-in and emotional support.”

They set up a social worker Google Classroom to provide students with a safe space to share feelings and engage in conversation, including a weekly virtual Lunch Bunch. They have created videos, posted to the district’s YouTube channel, to support students and parents in areas like believing in yourself, mindfulness and addressing challenges at home.

Berezein and Podkowka have kept in daily contact with classroom teachers, both to offer guidance on addressing student needs they see and to support teachers themselves with their own social-emotional needs.

At the secondary level, the mental health team – counselors, social workers, psychologists and nurses – has been making weekly phone calls to students and families to check in on their well-being and needs. Counselors have held grade level meetings with students over Google Meet on several occasions in addition to individual counseling sessions with students. The team created online surveys for students to self-report their mental health needs. From these meetings and surveys, they have seen how student needs have changed from school work support to issues that increasingly fall under the mental health umbrella.

“With the announcement that schools are closed for the remainder of the year, that is bringing out different issues that didn’t happen when school was in session,” guidance counselor Bob Mengucci said. “The best thing we can do is listen, because right now there are no answers.”

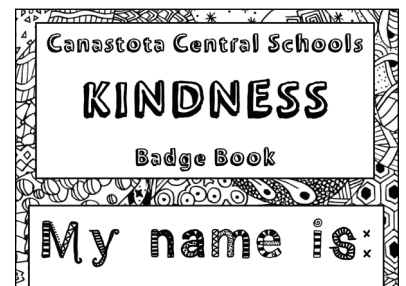
School psychologists have developed videos as support resources for parents, and they regularly speak with both parents and students about stress, anxiety, isolation and other issues that arise.

The entire team has also worked to support teachers both with issues they may be seeing in students as well as their own mental health needs.

Elementary Schools Begin Kindness Initiative

The three elementary schools launched a new kindness initiative to help students at PSES, SSES and RSES develop their positive character traits and social-emotional skills.

Interim Administrator Karen Henner worked with the elementary principals, school psychologists, social workers and teachers to develop three versions of the Kindness Badge Book – for grades K-2, 3-5 and 6. Each book has a variety of age-appropriate activities that build on the kindness theme and encourage students to practice and develop their social-emotional skills. Each book includes a kindness scavenger hunt and a game board to keep track of their progress.



Henner said the district decided to rollout the first badge book while students are home because of the increased need for mental health support and to increase student engagement in school.

“Mental health is a key piece of school and families are saying that it’s especially needed now,” she said.

The books are part of the larger Engage Canastota initiative that launched last summer with business and community meetings. Henner said participants have overwhelmingly said they want students to have more “soft skills.” To start that process, elementary students will utilize a series of badge books with different themes. Secondary students will earn digital badges and recognitions for different achievements, many awarded by community partners involved in Engage Canastota.

CCSD Responds To COVID-19

BY THE NUMBERS

950 Chromebooks loaned to students

26 Internet hotspots loaned to students

300 Google Classrooms (up from 150)

800% increase in teacher posts to Google Classroom

100% increase in student posts to Google Classroom

100+ Google Meetings started daily by staff

Technology Supports Remote Learning Needs

The Technology Department worked throughout the closure to support the growing and changing technology needs of students and staff utilizing remote learning.

When schools closed in March, the district ramped up its Raider 1:1 efforts by providing Chromebooks to all students in grades 2-6. Including all the students in 7-12 who already had Chromebooks, the district is currently managing more than 950 of those devices. The Transportation staff helped deliver Chromebooks to families that couldn't pick them up, and they have helped pickup and deliver devices that needed repairs and maintenance.

Assistant Superintendent for Special Education, RTI and Technology Chris Clancy and EdTech Coach Cecile Retrosi created a COVID-19 resource webpage and a separate wellness website for teachers. The numbers at left show the technology in use now, compared to March.

Retrosi holds daily virtual office hours and a weekly Tched Out Tuesdays session for teachers to learn about new tools. She has created tutorials and offers email/text support for teachers, parents and students related to distance learning needs, manages student Internet hotspots, and manages content on the district's YouTube channel, where many teachers are posting videos to reach families.

Jennings Continues Leadership Work

Students in the JSBS and RSES spent much of the year working with educational consultant Otis Jennings on leadership development activities to help boost their engagement, attendance, academics and social-emotional skills. Since schools closed, Jennings has been working with students and staff to develop a website of tools and resources for all students in 7-12 to access and continue that work.

"This is for all students and community members – they're things all students can benefit from," he said "This is about life skills and how to organize your schoolwork and your life to help you achieve your goals."

The initiative ties in to the district's social-emotional curriculum and encourages students to see themselves as leaders and adopt a growth mindset.

Jennings worked with educational coach Jeff Abraham, who is also a substitute teacher in the district, to create and launch the website, which includes videos, articles, links, planning documents and time management ideas for students to work on their own.

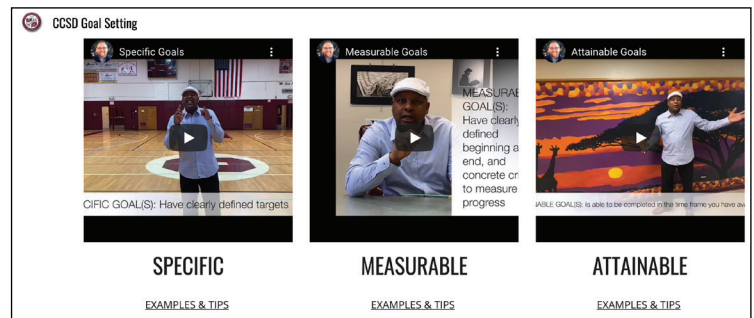
They are planning to develop a video series targeted at RSES students as well. Although the main ideas of goal-setting, perseverance, positive attitude and other character traits would be similar, the tone and ideas would be more appropriate for younger students.

Abraham said the instruction they are delivering through this online initiative goes beyond simply helping students set goals.

"We teach students a lot about how to set a goal, but we don't always go beyond that to how to envision that goal, what mindset to have, what activities to perform," he said. "We're trying to bring a coaching model into this."

Jennings said he also stresses resilience and course correction with students, both in person and in his videos.

"When something goes wrong, you need to look at the situation and figure out how to fix it or what to do next instead of just giving up," he said. "That is a skill that can help translate to better academic performance."



CCSD Responds To COVID-19

The Rainbow Connection Project

Kristie Boisen asked her high school art students to create rainbows using anything they had at home to show solidarity during social distancing. Students sent in photos of their projects on display at home.



Students Join Virtual Spirit Days

PSES and SSES held virtual spirit days for three Mondays this spring to help maintain their students' sense of community even while they were apart. They had a Raider Day, a Mismatch Day and a Silly Hat/Bunny Ears Day, and families submitted their photos for the district's Facebook page.



High School Science Club Contest

Winners



1st Place: Alyse Stockbridge

Bunny hutch made from repurposed materials

2nd Place: Amelia Dansby

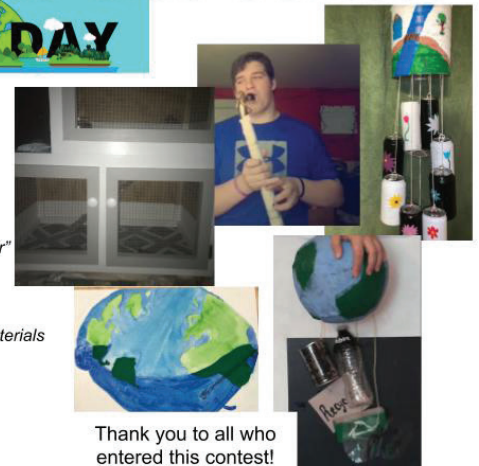
Wrote and performed an original song, "Sunflower"

3rd Place: Kyle Evans

Functional saxophone made from repurposed materials

4th Place: Jessica Kimball

Wind chimes made from repurposed materials



Thank you to all who entered this contest!

CCSD Responds To COVID-19

Celebrating Seniors



In recognition of this year's graduating seniors, the Junior-Senior High School, Canastota Alumni Association, Canastota Teachers Association and Canastota Retired Teachers Association partnered to purchase lawn signs for each member of the Class of 2020! A number of JSHS staff members - including teachers Stacy Stagnitti, Jennifer Kurak, Erin Tucci, Bob Mengucci, Brian Dwyer, Athletic Director Stan Congden and Principal Jay Altobello - set up the signs on the front lawn of the school so anyone driving by can see and celebrate our seniors. Eventually, the seniors will be able to take home their own signs to display at home.

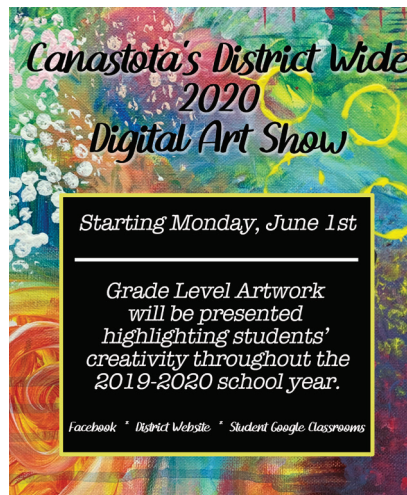
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Clifford Spotted at PSES

PSES students who stopped by school this month to pick up a new packet of instructional materials got a big surprise - Clifford the Big Red Dog stood outside the school greeting families in their cars as staff handed over packets!



Digital Art Show



The Canastota Art Department has turned its 18th annual K-12 District Art Show - usually on display around the budget and board vote - into a digital art show. Art teachers are creating digital displays of student artwork that will be posted online beginning June 1 so the community can still celebrate our student artists' creativity and talent! Thank you to Kristie Boisen, Denise Whalen, Melissa Buneo and Melissa Palkovic for putting the presentations together.

From the Superintendent

are struggling with the uncertainty associated with this year's budget process. In a normal year, we would know how much aid we were receiving on or around April 1st. Having that information, we would then construct a budget plan for the next school year, and our budget vote would be conducted on the 3rd Tuesday in May. This year, we still don't even know what our aid allocation will be less than a week from when the original vote was scheduled (May 19th). This uncertainty has compelled us to prepare for a wide variety of budget scenarios as we await finalized details related to our budget situation for 2020-21.

I want to assure our school community that we are working hard to provide the highest quality education for the most reasonable cost. We are planning to present a budget that maintains opportunities for students while acting as responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. It is important to keep in mind that the state has reserved the right to adjust the amount of aid schools receive at several "lookback" periods throughout the year. This means that we may be forced to make mid-year adjustments to our budget - in other words, we must be prepared to deal with rapidly changing circumstances and unique challenges. This is far from the typical process districts deal with in constructing their spending plan, and it will require the district to exercise disciplined decision-making and creative problem-solving in order to maintain and enhance instructional programming. While the circumstances are less than ideal, I firmly believe that our district is well positioned to tackle the challenges that lie ahead. Again, we appreciate your continued support as we work our way through this highly unusual budget season. Please continue to look for our frequent updates (both in writing and video format) that will outline new information as it becomes available. Stay safe, and go Raiders!

BUSINESS STUDENTS ATTEND TRADE SHOW



CHS Business students in the Entrepreneurship class attended the Virtual Enterprise North East Trade Show in Rochester in February, along with their peers from 14 other schools from across the state. The trade show provides students with an opportunity to practice their business skills through different business skills contests, such as sales contracts and promotions, as well as in-person meetings with business representatives.

Canastota students earned an Honorable Mention in the Business Plan competition for their company, TECRAID.

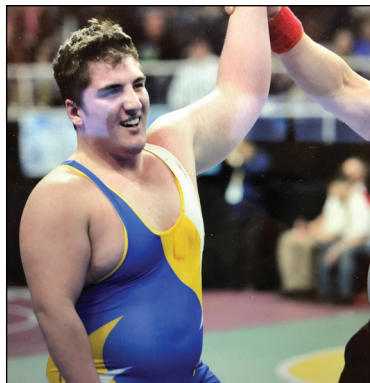
GALLERY FEATURES STUDENTS, TEACHERS



JSHS teachers Kristie Boisen, Melissa Buneo and Denise Whalen and 12th grader Sara Shaver, 11th grader Bailey Doxtator, and 8th grader Mya Rizzo had their artwork on display at 4 Elements Studio in Utica this spring as part of a regional teacher-student exhibit. "Art: The Common Thread," now in its fifth year, is a product of the regional MOBOCES Art PLC, which Boisen facilitates.

Two Raiders Compete At States

Two winter athletes from the Raiders family qualified for state-level competition this year. Junior Laura Suppa competed in the 55-meter hurdles on March 7 at the NYS Indoor Track and Field Championships and is among the top hurdlers in the state. Senior Mike Liebl took second place at the NYS Wrestling Championships, ending his season with a record of 45-1.



NTHS Inducts 17 From Canastota

Seventeen Canastota seniors were inducted into the National Technical Honor Society at MOBOCES this spring for excellence in career and technical education (CTE). This distinction is achieved by only 3-4% of CTE students nationwide.

Isabella Barry, Allied Health Partnership

Alexandra Campbell, Cosmetology

Carly Cashel, Engineering New Visions

Samantha Haddad, Engineering New Visions

Joshua Heckerman, Engineering New Visions

Andrew Marshall, Engineering New Visions

Abby O'Connell, Engineering New Visions

Katlyn Dupre, Equine and Animal Science

Laura McKillip, Equine and Animal Science

Hayley Patane, Law and Government

Payten Shirley, New Visions Professions

Alexus Stout, New Visions Professions

Gracie Morris, New Visions Professions

Tatiana Nowakowski, New Visions Professions

Rebecca Popple, New Visions Professions

Alyse Stockbridge, New Visions Professions

Nicholas Weber, New Visions Professions



Join Our Team of Drivers!

Become a substitute bus driver for Canastota!

Applicants must be 21 years or older and have a CDL-B license with a school bus and passenger endorsement. Hours will vary. Current pay for substitute bus drivers is \$20.95 per hour.

The district also offers an unpaid training (up to 2 months) to help drivers with a class D license earn their CDL-B.

district

FFA Students Earn Accolades

Mr. Shawn Bissetta
Superintendent

Mr. Christopher Clancy
Assistant Superintendent for
Special Education, RTI &
Technology

Mr. Nicholas Panuccio Jr.
School Business Leader

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

Mr. Robert Taube
South Side Elementary
School Principal

Ms. Cynthia Clark
Transportation Supervisor

Mr. Nick Campbell
Facilities Leader

administration



Several FFA students earned accolades this semester, both before and after schools were closed, for their agriculture and leadership work.

Junior Jessica Kimball earned her FFA Empire (State) Degree by completing 360 hours of agriculture education, at least 300 hours outside of school on a supervised agriculture experience project, and at least 25 hours of community service, among other requirements.

Senior Kyle Hale earned a Bronze proficiency rating from NYS FFA on his supervised agriculture experience related to his maple production business. He worked for more than 221 hours over the past two years on this project and invested more than \$500 in the project. He plans to reapply next year to try for a Gold rating.

Kyle and Jessica also had an opportunity to travel to the State Capitol Building in Albany this winter for a New York State FFA Leadership Experience. More than 100 students from across the state met with legislators to discuss current agriculture issues, how FFA has influenced their lives, and their future career goals.

In addition, Kyle and sophomore Mark Mooney competed at the NYS FFA District V Career and Leadership Development Event. Kyle competed in the Employment Skills Competition and Mark competed in the FFA Creed Speaking Contest.

Register For Pre-K, Kindergarten

Is your child ready to start pre-kindergarten or kindergarten in the fall? Register now!

For pre-k: Children who will be 4 years old on or before December 1, 2020 are eligible for our half-day program (AM and PM sessions). Registration packets are available on the MOBOCES website, https://www.moboces.org/programs_services/pre-k-12_instructional/pre-kindergarten. To register, you will need your child's birth certificate, immunization record and proof of residency (such as a mortgage statement or utility bill). Please contact MOBOCES at 315-361-5903 or District Registrar Amanda Snyder at 315-697-6326 with questions or concerns.

For kindergarten: Children who will be 5 years old on or before December 1, 2020 are eligible for our full-day kindergarten program. Registration packets can be downloaded from the district website, https://pses.canastotacsd.org/parents/kindergarten_registration. Parents may also contact District Registrar Amanda Snyder at 315-697-6326 to request a registration packet by mail and for further details. To register, you will need to provide your child's birth certificate, immunization record, proof of residency and parent photo ID.



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President

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Vice President

Mr. Timothy Bazan
Mr. Wesley Hood
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Ms. Kathleen Niles
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education