



## A Message From The Superintendent



As we head further into the fall semester, it's tough to know where to start my update to the Canastota school community. In all of my years working in a school, I don't think I've seen a year where so many significant events have converged all at once – the continuation of the COVID pandemic, work associated with a major capital project, significant initiatives in the area of curriculum and instruction, and the introduction of some innovative community partnerships that will increase connections between the school and the larger community. No doubt about it, there's a lot going on.

Without question, COVID has dominated the conversation as the new school year began. While it has continued to cause disruptions, we've been able to navigate through the challenges thanks to the exceptional work of our staff members and the cooperation of our families. We continue to work closely with the Madison County Health Department to minimize the spread of COVID within the school, and we have successfully introduced weekly testing where necessary. We've learned a lot while dealing with COVID, and one of the most important lessons is that no matter what the challenge, we need to find a way to get positive things done in our school community. We will continue to work with all of the resources available to us as we battle this disease. Fortunately, there will be a point when COVID will not dominate our daily routines as it currently does, and when that day finally comes, we'll be stronger than ever.

One way to make sure we continue to grow as a school community is to ensure that we share important information with all of our stakeholders. This fall, we embarked on a new initiative to do just that by launching an ongoing series of parent/community sessions designed to provide important information to our school community. Our first session was held in late September – at the pavilion at the International Boxing Hall of Fame – and the focus was squarely on the unique opportunities available to our families through exciting new partnerships with a variety of community partners. Our badging and micro-credentialing initiative is now fully underway, and we will continue to offer additional sessions on this important subject in case you didn't have a chance to catch last month's overview. Additional sessions will be scheduled each month. Please check our website for updated information on this important series of sessions.

Our capital project continues to move along and will continue throughout the remainder of this school year. Along with major infrastructure updates – including extensive roofing work, plumbing and electrical and security enhancements – we were pleased to debut our brand new all-purpose athletic field during the halftime ceremony of our recent Homecoming football game. It was exciting to welcome back former soccer, field hockey, cheerleaders and football players as we celebrated our new field that will benefit these teams moving into the future (along with physical education classes on a daily



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# District Unveils Ambassador Badge at New Community Forum

The Canastota School District has launched a new Educational Leadership Series aimed at informing local residents and businesses about district efforts and increasing community engagement with school.

The community forum, held at the International Boxing Hall of Fame, allowed district leaders to debut a new collaboration with the Hall of Fame to support the career-readiness work of high school students. The Event Ambassador Badge program provides an opportunity for students in grades 9-12 to assist IBHOF with its major Hall of Fame Weekend and Induction Ceremony in June. Along the way, students will learn about local history, sport industry, communication, event planning, business operations and leadership, meeting specific goals in each area to earn small credentials on their way to earning the culminating Event Ambassador Badge.

“These credentials are all stackable, so even if a student doesn’t finish the whole program, they have something that shows what they have accomplished and what they can achieve,” said Liz Garofalo, the Coordinator of Innovative Learning, who designed the badging initiative. “Employment skills are built right into the work for each badge.”

More than 70 students have already signed up to participate in the program. Several of them attended the formal announcement event and had an opportunity to step inside the famous boxing ring used for the 1971 Ali-Frazier match.

The program is part of a larger, districtwide Canastota Connects badging initiative that has been rolled out at different grade levels since 2020. The initiative allows students to work independently to complete different activities to show mastery in various topics, such as demonstrating good character, leadership development, goal setting and community service. Different badges are available at different age levels and are completed in an age-appropriate way, with completed badges following students throughout their school career in a digital portfolio.

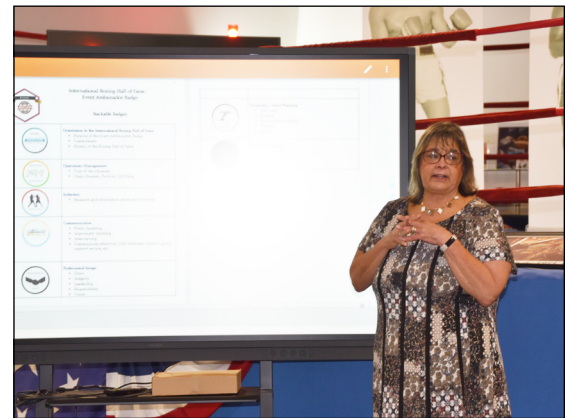
The Event Ambassador Badge, and each of its component badges, are among those credentials that students can show to colleges and employers to demonstrate their skills. It also furthers the partnership between the IBHOF and the district, following the Hall of Fame hosting the CHS 2021 Commencement in June.

“Our relationships with the school has always been fantastic but this takes it a step further and it’s going to be exciting,” IBHOF Executive Director Ed Brophy said.



For the badge announcement at the Educational Leadership Series meeting, students, parents, district leaders and community members attended to learn more about the program and the series itself. The monthly series will feature an in-depth look at different district initiatives. Superintendent Shawn Bissetta said the forums are meant to ensure community members are aware of the great things going on in the district and the opportunities available to Canastota students.

“We want our kids to have every possible advantage to prepare them for what comes next,” he said.



## RSES, JSHS Join Positivity Project



Students and staff in grades 4-12 are excited to be able to participate in the Positivity Project this school year! The Positivity Project, founded in 2015, focuses on 24 character traits that are taught and reinforced throughout the year through discussions, activities and demonstrating them throughout the building.

Founders Jeff Bryan and Mike Irwin said their inspiration for the project came from one of their former college professors, Dr. Chris Peterson, a founder of the study of 'Positive Psychology.' Staff learned during their initial training that Dr. Peterson often began his college lectures by stating, "Anything that builds relationships between and among people is going to make you happy."

During September Superintendent's Conference Days, staff of RSES and JSHS completed training on the background of Positive Psychology and received access to the Positivity Project curriculum. Program resources include character cards, slideshows, video clips and interactive questions. Core committee members and building leaders from both schools demonstrated how to effectively use the resources and explained how to teach the core character traits throughout this school year. Activities and events are being planned in both buildings to help recognize character strengths in each other.

Students and staff at RSES and JSHS are excited to be able to start bringing more positivity to their schools and will share more about their successes as the year progresses.

## FBLA Student Competes at State Level



CHS sophomore Nicole Aumell competed in the FBLA-PBL National Center National Leadership Conference in June and made it to the final round of the Help Desk competition, competing virtually against students from across the country. This event, which challenges participants to demonstrate an understanding of and provide technical assistance to end users, includes both an objective test and a performance component.

Nicole, the current Canastota FBLA Chapter Treasurer, was one of just 4 NYS students to make it to the finals in their event!

## BUSINESS PROGRAM EARNS STATE AWARD

The Business Teachers Association of New York State (BTANYS) named the JSHS Business Education Department as its Department of the Year for the 2020-2021 school year.

The department demonstrated excellence in CTE credentials, specialized courses, work-based learning, and college credit.

Canastota business students have the opportunity to take a variety of courses. Co-curricular activities such as virtual guest speakers, field trips, job interview day, and a school store help engage students in the courses and provide a glimpse into real-world activities in the field. The JSHS also has a Business and Marketing Honor Society and an active chapter of Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA).

"We are very fortunate to have a comprehensive Business Department," Business Teacher Bob Esposito said. "Business Education is imperative in all schools to provide comprehensive well-rounded educational opportunities for all students."

The Board of Education recognized Esposito at its September meeting.



## SUPERINTENDENT'S CONFERENCE DAYS

CCSD teachers had several opportunities this fall to tackle some important professional development topics as one way to help increase student achievement and meet changing student needs this year. Teachers worked in school, grade level and department groups to review and analyze data from ELA and math assessments; review student and staff needs related to social emotional learning and diversity, equity and inclusion; plan for more personalized academic support for students; and complete a safety and security training program offered to all school staff by Armoured One.



## Congrats to our 2021 Homecoming Court!



Devon Youker  
Homecoming King



Chance Jaquin  
Homecoming Queen



Hailey Dimao  
Homecoming Princess



Bryson DeMott  
Homecoming Prince



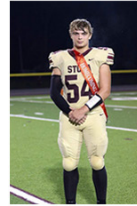
Austin Ames



Ryan Aumell



Evan Austerman



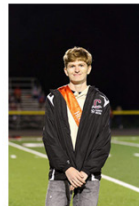
Casey Bixby



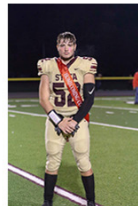
Alasondra Campanaro



Kennedy Kimball



Griffin Leahey



Damien Madle



Chloe McEwen



Arwen Relyea



Mackenzie Snyder



Maya Tucci

## Collection Supports Local Residents

The Future Teachers of America (FTA) student club held a personal hygiene drive in October to benefit local residents in need through a collaboration with Community Action Partnership (CAP) of Madison County. For three weeks, the club encouraged donations of toothbrushes, toilet paper, shampoo and other essential items.

The FTA, open to all students in grades 7-12, focuses on service projects that benefit the Canastota community. Past activities have included writing thank you notes to essential school employees, mentoring elementary students, hosting food drives, participating in community clean up events and supporting the Special Olympics.

## Chittenango Canal Museum Visit Includes Paranormal Investigation

Thirty students in grades 7-12 visited the Chittenango Landing Canal Boat Museum for an historical field trip about the Erie Canal. The highlight of the Saturday evening visit was the opportunity to join an active paranormal investigation led by museum staff in each of the three main buildings. Students asked questions, assisted with equipment, and heard stories from staff about paranormal happenings while working at the museum at night.



# PSES, SSES Dive Into Learning



Kindergarteners started the year by working on early literacy skills, including letter identification, letter sounds and syllables.

Ms. Snyder used her word board to help students create rhyming words.



SSES students began a unit on Ancient Asian Civilizations by locating the civilizations on a world map.

Second graders talked about measurement in math class and used paper meter rulers to measure objects in the room.



New PSES music teacher Mr. Hayes plays guitar for kindergarten students during music class.

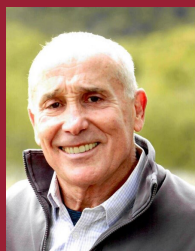


Ms. Scheftic's 2nd grade class finished their Fairy Tales and Tall Tales unit with giant pancakes, just like Paul Bunyan made!

## WALL OF DISTINCTION

Congratulations to our 2021 inductees to the Canastota Wall of Distinction!

We had our annual Induction Dinner on October 16 at Theodore's Restaurant to recognize this year's induction class for their achievements.



George Bellino,  
Class of 1966



Dr. Edward  
Capparelli,  
Class of 1972



Patricia  
DeMauro  
Dickinson,  
Class of 1962



James Jones,  
Class of 1966



June Worden,  
Class of 1981

## New Coordinator Role To Lead Equity & Social Emotional Programming



The Canastota district created a new Coordinator of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion & Social Emotional Learning (DEI/SEL) position this year to support students, families and staff in their understanding of these important topics.

The district's primary goal in creating this role is to ensure it provides a safe learning environment for all students. Through the pandemic, staff and administrators have seen an increase in students struggling with mental health

issues, as well as other pandemic related issues. This role is vital to students, staff and Canastota families to help their overall well-being through the use of consistent, meaningful research-based educational practices.

The coordinator, Kristie Boisen, will oversee the implementation of programming related to those areas. She will also provide resources, support and professional development to staff to help them better understand how to incorporate both DEI and SEL into their instructional practices. In addition to her work in school, she will be creating a webpage for families and community members with resources available to support their needs. Topics might include: What does stress look like and how can we help our students? What role can Mindfulness and breathing play in helping an anxious student? How does music affect our brains? What exactly is Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in regards to education?

Boisen is continuing in her longtime role as a high school art teacher while serving in this new DEI/SEL Coordinator role part-time.

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## Superintendent's Message

basis for all students). Our field is now associated with being the best around; the Spectrum News Sports Director described our new field as "the best home field in Section 3." How awesome is that!

Being the best is our goal here at Canastota – in everything that we do. As we continue to update our facilities, solidify our core academic programs and expand our community partnerships, we are reminded of the fact that we have a tremendous responsibility to provide our students with opportunities that are second to none. With your help and support, we will work hard to live up to this lofty standard. I look forward to updating you on the exciting progress we are making in each of these areas as we move further into the school year. While Canastota has always been an awesome place, with our well-earned reputation as the hometown of champions, we're just scratching the surface of our potential as a school community. The best is yet to come. Go Raiders!!

Sincerely,

Shawn Bissetta, Superintendent

# Elementary Special Education Classes Return to District

Canastota has expanded its special education offerings this year, creating two new mixed-age classes at the elementary level. The move allows students who previously attended full-day classes at Madison-Oneida BOCES to remain in the district with their peers.

Students in the K-2 class are learning at PSES and are taught by Melissa Nugent and TAs Jolene Davis, Chiene McCracken and Diane Poppleton. The 3-5 class is at RSES and is taught by Earlene Krieger and TA Stacey Snyder.

Assistant Director of Special Education Kathie Palladino said allowing students to remain in their own community benefits them academically, socially and emotionally.

“The best thing for children is to be with their neighborhood peers to develop friendships and lifelong connections,” she said.

She said it also provides general education students with a way to meet students they might not otherwise meet, learn to communicate in different ways, and learn to embrace differences within the community.

“We are diverse in so many ways, and it’s important for all of them to be part of the school community,” Palladino said. “We want to give all of our families a true Canastota Raider experience.”



## SUPPORT THE ECEF!

### Monetary Support

Looking for a way to support school projects? Consider donating to the Engage Canastota Educational Foundation. The foundation was established this past summer to help provide funding for unique student programs. Donations can be made by cash, check or credit card. Visit the district website to find a link to the ECEF website, where you can learn more about what the foundation does, who is on the board and how to make a contribution.



### Volunteer Support

The Foundation is always looking for interested parents and community members to get involved through volunteer board positions and committees, event planning support, communication and alumni outreach. Contact [engagecanastota@gmail.com](mailto:engagecanastota@gmail.com) or visit the ECEF on Facebook @EngageCanastota.

## Employment Opportunities

The Canastota school district is looking for substitutes in instructional and non-instructional positions, including teachers, teacher aides, school monitors, nurses, bus drivers, bus attendants, food service staff and cleaners.

Anyone who is interested can visit our website for requirements and application materials or call 315-697-2025.



# 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

**Ms. Maura White**  
Roberts Street Elementary  
School Principal

**Ms. Jennifer Carnahan**  
Peterboro Street Elementary  
School Principal

**Ms. Vanessa McCowry**  
South Side Elementary School Principal

**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

**Mr. Michael Sales**  
Technology Director

## Students Gain Work Experience In New High School Course



CHS is offering a new work-based learning class this fall to provide juniors and seniors with authentic learning experiences and career exploration opportunities.

The new class is taught by Agriculture and CTE teacher Paula Burnor, who is a certified WBL Coordinator. She provides the students with hands-on opportunities to explore their career goals, abilities and interests, learn employability skills, and complete practical applications of the academic and technical knowledge they gain in the classroom. They also work on resume preparation and job interviewing, and work toward completing work-based learning badges through the Canastota Connects digital badging initiative, and work toward an internship with a local business in their career field of interest.

Current student career interests include Horticulture, Accounting, Management, Nursing, Film, Animal Grooming, Theatre, Sports Broadcasting, and Culinary Arts. Area businesses interested in providing current or future students with work-based learning opportunities can contact Paula Burnor at 315-697-2003.

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