

A Message From The Superintendent



As we move into the second half of the 2021-22 school year, there are many exciting things happening in our schools. Our capital project continues to move along at both SSES and the Roberts Street complex. Work will begin at PSES shortly, and our 1st graders and some of our pre-k classes will transition to SSES for the remainder of the school year. While we know this causes disruption, having an updated facility for students to learn in will make this temporary inconvenience worth it. When our current 1st and 3rd graders start the 2022-23 school year in SSES and RSES,

respectively, they will be veterans in both of those buildings. There will be many more updates coming as we head into March.

The 2022-23 budget season is upon us, and we have reason to be optimistic. The Governor's initial budget calls for a healthy aid allocation increase for Canastota schools - nearly \$1.5 million, with more than \$700,000 in the form of Foundation Aid. While this is far from a done deal, it certainly represents a positive starting point for budget discussions with the Legislature. We will be closely monitoring the process unfold in Albany and eagerly await the Legislative proposal. With a positive initial proposal for school aid, coupled with the continuation of federal COVID-related funding, I'm optimistic that we will head into the new year in a strong, stable financial situation. Much more to come on this over the next few months.

While our facilities/infrastructure and finances serve to support the foundation for our school, the heart of our work centers around the educational programming and services that we can extend to our students and their families. Despite the numerous challenges arising from the pandemic, exciting developments are occurring in this area as well. This year, we have introduced many initiatives designed to enhance our core academic program. One example is the introduction of a K-12, vertically-aligned literacy plan that will provide greater consistency to our overall program. We also continue to roll out new and innovative learning opportunities in our badging and micro-credentialing initiative. The signature badging program for this school year has come in the form of the "Ambassador" program, a unique partnership between Canastota Central Schools and the International Boxing Hall Of Fame. More than 30 of our students are now learning through hands-on, authentic experiences associated with the running of an international hall of fame venue that's right in our backyard – what an awesome experience for our students! We've only scratched the surface of the relevant, real-world experiences that our students will be able to access at our school.

Finally, I'd like to inform you that our school will be introducing the Connected Community Schools initiative right here in Canastota. The CCS program will



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Striving for Excellence
Canastota

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Students Continue To Pursue Ambassador Badge

More than 30 Canastota High School students continue to pursue the International Boxing Hall of Fame Ambassador Badge, a collaborative effort between the Hall of Fame and district leadership to provide students with real-world career-focused experiences.

The Ambassador Badge program, which launched this fall, exposes students to all aspects of the Hall of Fame operations by participating in hands-on, engaging lessons. Students gain valuable leadership experiences as they connect with International Boxing Hall of Fame management, staff, volunteers, and honored guests.

Participating students attend bi-weekly meetings and have already received stackable badges in the areas of Orientation, Operations, Communication, and Inductees. The capstone event will be to participate in Induction Weekend in June, where eligible students will have an opportunity to serve as hosts, assist inductees and distinguished guests, support Hall of Fame staff, and assist during the Banquet of Champions, and help make the weekend a success.

Overall, the program's goals are to help students: Understand the International Boxing Hall of Fame operations and management; Become familiar with the biographies of all inductees; Develop excellent communication skills; Create and uphold a professional image at all times; Develop an understanding of the hospitality industry; Develop an understanding of sports management and sports marketing; and Serve as excellent representatives of the Canastota Central School District.



Engage Canastota Foundation Funds First Event

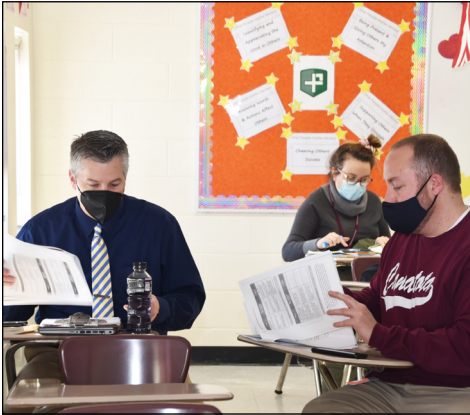
Thirty CHS Class and Student Government officers attended a Leadership Workshop this fall at Theodore's Restaurant and Banquets, participating in leadership development and team-building activities to foster a more positive school environment. The event, spearheaded by Kelley Brenon, Liz Garofalo and Lisa Visalli, was the first project to be funded through an Engage Canastota Education Foundation grant.



Topics included Parliamentary Procedure, the district's digital badging program, brainstorming sessions on leadership and legacy projects, and a student-driven discussion on current school issues and concerns. Thanks to our guest speakers: Isaac Smith, Community Relations Director at Assemblyman Salka's office; Village of Canastota Mayor Roseanne Warner; Wall of Distinction Board Member Deb Gustin Ford; and Canastota Alumni Association Vice President Doug Gustin.

Teachers Focus On Literacy Instruction

The Canastota district has continued its ongoing partnership with The Reading League, a Syracuse-based national nonprofit that focuses on the science of reading. After a summer kickoff event, Reading League experts and consultants have returned throughout the year to work with different groups of teachers on targeted professional development in research-based literacy instruction. Last month, secondary ELA and special education teachers worked on vocabulary building and scaffolding text.



21 STUDENTS JOIN HONOR SOCIETY

Congratulations to the 21 CHS students inducted into the National Honor Society!

These student leaders demonstrate outstanding academics and exemplary behavior and character throughout their high school careers. The Canastota NHS chapter now has 62 students in grades 10-12, under advisors Erin Tucci and Sean Dwyer.

10th graders: Nicole Aumell, Avery Austerman, Meilyn Becker, McKenzie Cordell, Chloe Curtis, Jesse deMaintenon, Zachary Doxtater, Connor Farwell, Andrew Haddad, Christopher Hanley, Mya Rizzo, Connor Russell, Molly Townsend

11th graders: Culley Bellino, Hailee Blasier, Anna Campbell, Lana Maher, Nevaeh Stanley

12th graders: Evan Austerman, Trinity Krom, Logan Tobin

Elementary Campaign Helps Families In Need

Throughout November and December, PSES and SSES students held a loose change campaign to raise money for our local food pantry, the Opportunity Shop. Over the six-week "Change A Family's Holiday" campaign, students put any loose change they could spare into jars in each classroom. Just before the December break, K-3 Social Worker Amelia Berezein was able to hand over a check from that change for \$1,265 to Barb Ortman at the Opportunity Shop. That's a lot of pennies and dimes!

Throughout the six weeks, Mrs. Berezein talked with students not only about the value of service learning but also the schools' fall character education themes of helping each other, working together, showing kindness and generosity.



MUSEUM TRIP EXAMINES HISTORY



Junior high school social studies students visited The Canastota Canal Town Museum for a local history lesson. Museum Historian Joe DiGiorgio hosted a tour of the museum and shared the legacy of early inhabitants to the area. Students used antique printing machines, watched early films and explored several other interactive exhibits.

Leadership Group Plans Fundraising

For the 2021-2022 school year, 40 RSES students in 5th and 6th grade have been invited to join the school's Leadership Group, led by School Counselor Rachel DiGeorge and Cultural and Educational Liaison Otis Jennings. The group meets every Thursday after school to discuss their ideas on helping their school and community, practicing their SMART Goals skills in the process.

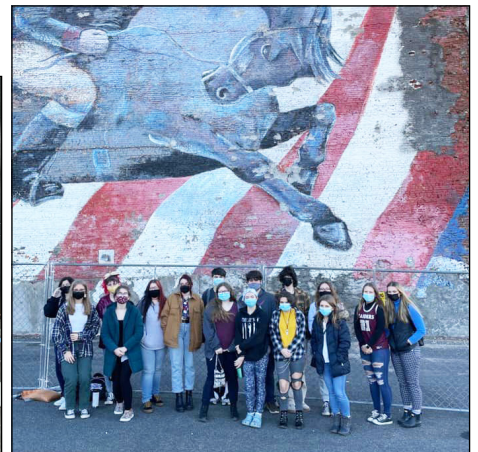
Students decided they wanted to raise money for a worthy cause, and they are brainstorming ideas for how to reach that goal. Students will have the opportunity to present their own ideas to their peers and to vote as a group on which cause to support.



Students Explore Art Venues In Rome

High School Art Teachers Kristie Boisen and Denise Whalen took their students to visit Rome's "Arts District" to explore different art forms and venues. Their day included a visit to The Copper Easel, where they heard from the gallery owner about starting a business while remaining a practicing artist; Songbyrd Street Studios to learn about glass fusing and create a piece of their own; Keaton and Lloyd Bookstore; and the Cinema Capitol Gallery to hear from exhibiting artist Larry Migliori about his photography.

Students ended the day with a tour of the Capitol Theater, discussing the current restoration project, architecture design and history with the theater director.



Music Students Earn Regional, State Honors



Congratulations to our outstanding music students who were invited to perform this past weekend at the All-County Music Festival in Oneida. It was the first All-County festival since the start of the pandemic.

6th Grade Chorus: Brelynn Halsey and Ranyah Brown (soprano), Cole Muir and Gemma Smileuski (alto) *(pictured above)*

Junior High Band: Alivia Page (flute), Brooke Roberts (clarinet), Owen Larish (tuba), Holden Aumell (percussion)

Senior High Band: Bryce Flynn (trumpet), Audrey Stephany (trombone), Dominic Austin (percussion)

In addition, Lucas Piatkowski performed with the New York State School Music Association Conference All-State Mixed Choir in Rochester. He auditioned with thousands of other students at a virtual NYSSMA Solo Festival last spring and was among just 160 students selected to sing with the ensemble!

K-4 Works on Character Traits

Students in grades K-4 have spent much of the school year engaging in different initiatives to help them develop and practice positive character traits.

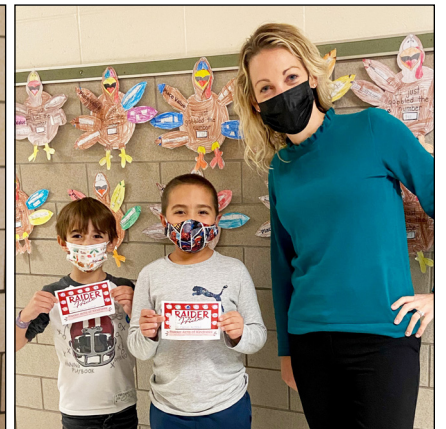
RSES Counselor Rachel DiGeorge launched “Caught Doing Good,” a weekly effort to recognize students in grades 3 and 4 who model the school’s behavior expectations. DiGeorge asks staff across the building to recommend students who they have seen making an extra effort to create a positive learning environment, help others and take pride in themselves and their work. Each week, one third grader gets to have lunch in DiGeorge’s office and one fourth grader receives a free ice cream!

DiGeorge also creates a weekly bulletin board of students who demonstrate a pre-selected character trait. Students are nominated by their classroom teachers and have their pictures featured on the board for the week.

Over at SSES and PSES, principals challenged students this fall to complete “Raider Acts of Kindness” both in and out of school. During the three-week campaign, students had to complete 10 kind acts to qualify for a prize, tracking their progress on special punchcards created for the initiative.

Students earned their prizes by picking up pencils, tying each other’s shoes, inviting others to play, holding doors for each other, sharing toys, and using their manners more consistently.

“It’s about recognizing kids for doing small, helpful, everyday good deeds that they do naturally, but pointing them out, with the hope that it would continue to spread,” SSES Principal Vanessa McClowry said.



CANASTOTA'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

Throughout the 2021-22 school year, Canastota has partnered with various agencies to help keep our schools open for in-person learning.

These partnerships include: working with Madison-Oneida BOCES and Quadrant Biosciences to offer weekly saliva screening testing for staff, students and outside contractors; distributing at-home test kits to staff and families; and working with different pharmacies to offer vaccination and booster clinics to students and staff.

Additional on-site testing and vaccination clinics as well as additional at-home test kits may be available in the future.

Here's a look at what we've done, as of February 10:

687

screening tests completed for staff and students

2,900+

at-home test kits distributed

142

vaccinations/boosters administered

Supporting Students' Mental Health

Kristie Boisen, Coordinator of Social Emotional Learning and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, gave a virtual presentation in December to the community on ways families can support students' mental health at home. Here are some excerpts from that presentation.

How are we helping your child in school? In all our Canastota school buildings, we have a Social Emotional Learning component built into the students' days. This support is provided by classroom teachers, social workers, school psychologists and guidance counselors.

Four Ways To Help Your Child At Home

1. Routines are key. Ensure your child goes to bed and wakes up at the same time daily. Daily school attendance is important. Try to eat meals at the same time daily.

Idea: Set an alarm on your phone to help set routines, from sleep habits to time to eat!

2. Take a social media break (Hard, I know). Choose a daily or weekly time to spend with family or friends to listen to music, play a game or eat a meal together without technology.

Idea: Choose 1 day a week to be your "no phone day" and choose a non-tech activity!

3. Stay Active, even when you don't feel like it. Being active improves your overall wellbeing and reduces stress. Encourage your child to be active 3-5x a week for 30 minutes daily. Try walking, yoga, exercise, riding a bike, jumping rope, hiking in nature or dancing in your kitchen!

Idea: There is an app for that!

4. Practice Mindfulness through deep breathing. Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not be overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us.

Deep breathing is a great way to bring down your heart rate and focus when you're feeling overwhelmed. Breathe in like you are smelling a flower, breathe out like you are blowing out birthday candles OR pretend your belly is a balloon. Breathe in and make the balloon bigger, then breathe out and make the balloon shrink.

Idea: Adults can try this too! Take a deep breath in and out at every stop light by counting to 4 in and counting to 4 out.

Youker Signs to Play DI Football



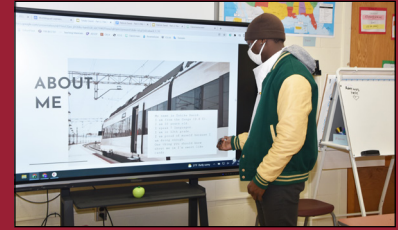
Senior Devon Youker signed his National Letter of Intent this semester to play Division I football at Central Connecticut State University. The college's head coach called Devon a versatile player who demonstrates explosiveness, vision and body control. Way to represent Canastota!

Raiders Excel in Winter Season



The Boys Varsity Wrestling Team won the Center State Conference Wrestling Championships and the Class D Section 3 Championship, and three team members competed at the NYS Championships. The Girls Varsity Volleyball Team maintained an 18-0 undefeated record in the regular season and advanced to sectionals. Hailey Dimao (long jump) and Devon Youker (long jump, 55 meter, 300 meter) earned gold medals at the Indoor Track Section 3 Championship. Congratulations!

ENL CLASS CREATES GOOGLE SITE



English as a New Language students created a website as a way to help practice their English and writing skills. They developed presentations about their backgrounds, interests and career goals. Teacher Austin Nojaim put those presentations into a Google Site so students could more easily share their information.

Capital Project Update

If you've visited us recently, you've seen all the progress we've made on our capital project!

Completed spaces include: RSES office and secure vestibule, Health Office, bathrooms, faculty room, electrical system; JSHS locker rooms, bathrooms, boilers, hot water heaters, electrical system; SSES classroom bathrooms, office and secure vestibule, roof; Transportation Building windows; and our multipurpose athletic field.

Still to come: JSHS main office and secure vestibule, guidance office, nurse's office, bathrooms, media center, parking lots, classroom doors, HVAC and plumbing, ceilings, security system; RSES bathrooms, parking lots, plumbing, classroom doors; District Office renovations and security upgrades; SSES classroom sinks and cabinets, bathrooms, classroom doors, plumbing, HVAC, lighting, security; PSES new roof, additional parking, playground surfacing, nurse's office, bathrooms, security upgrades, plumbing and heating; Transportation Office bathrooms, doors, security, parking lot; surfacing of the track and event area, sand pit covers.



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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

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Ms. Karen Henner
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Mr. Michael Sales
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Superintendent's Message

allow school employees to connect much-needed services and resources from regional agencies and companies directly to our students and their families. Whether it's a need for assistance in securing health or dental care, mental health services or to provide for the nutritional needs of a family, this partnership with CCS will be a tremendous asset to the Canastota school community. There will be much more information coming out in the next few weeks on this partnership explaining the full range of services that will be available to students and families, but for now, I wanted to share the great news that this resource is on the way!

As you can see, we have a great deal to be excited about here at Canastota. I look forward to providing you with updates on all of these initiatives, and I also look forward to seeing you at our upcoming school events. Go Raiders!

Sincerely,

Shawn Bissetta, Superintendent



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