Pajamas, Popcorn and Paperbacks Reading Night at CRS

Chestnut Ridge Elementary School hosted its first Pajamas, Popcorn and Paperbacks Reading Night this fall. Shortly after the doors opened at 6 p.m., the school cafeteria was filled with scores of excited students, younger siblings, parents and family members. Many wore warm, comfy pajamas and brought blankets and pillows — lots of books. They came prepared to settle in for a special night of reading together.

Many of the school’s teachers and administrators were on hand, taking turns as guest readers. The brave ones wore their pajamas or costumes. From the Cat in the Hat to Mary Poppins and Snow White, each guest reader attracted eager fans. Readers included Principal Kim Hale, Assistant Principal Jennifer Dixon, librarian Colleen Wilson, teachers Kerry Burnett, Brittany Colombo, Cassandra King, Crystal Leddon, Amy Lockamyier, Jackie Magiera and Jodi Piontkowski. Also sharing a favorite book was a visitor from the Chili Public Library, Wendy Saxena-Smith.

The literacy party was hosted by the CRS Parent Teacher Organization (CRSPTO). “We have a very strong, extremely creative group of volunteers in our PTO,” said CRSPTO secretary and substitute teacher Kelly Lamb, whose idea sparked the night of reading. “We are always looking for new ways to bring our community together for the benefit of our kids. This free event brought families out for a night of fun with friends, to meet neighbors and teachers in an informal atmosphere built around reading. Reading with your children brings families closer and events like this can help build a life-long love for reading.”

Get involved in your child’s school PTO!
CRS: https://www.cccsd.org/CRSPTO.aspx
CES: https://www.cccsd.org/CESPA.aspx
FRS: https://www.cccsd.org/FRESPA.aspx
MS: https://www.cccsd.org/MSPTO.aspx
Message from the Superintendent

Dear Community,

Best wishes for a New Year filled with hope and possibilities. For us, January means discussions, planning and budgeting for the 2020-21 school year. We have been working with building administrators and department directors to draft a responsible preliminary budget. Meetings will continue throughout January and a preliminary budget for the 2020-21 school year will be shared at upcoming Board of Education meetings during February and March.

The superintendent and Board of Education thank these students for allowing us to display their artwork in District Office: Paisly Belmont, Amanda Conner, Madelyn Freeman, Lia Gage, Sotirios Gitsis, Jessica Jong, Mekselina Maraslioglu, Madison Noll, Haley Smout, Morgan Travis, Alanna Tucker. Art will be replaced each fall with a reception for artists, their parents and teachers.

The budget is divided into four parts:

2. February 25, 2020: BOCES, Curriculum and Instruction, Central Services
3. March 10, 2020: Personnel, Special Items
4. March 24, 2020: Revenue Estimates

The proposed budget will be reviewed by the Board with potential adoption in April, ahead of the May 19, 2020, budget vote. All Board of Education meetings are held in the Board of Education meeting room in District Office at 139 Fairbanks Road at 7 p.m. and are open to the public.

Since September, a committee comprised of parents, community and staff have been researching the feasibility of implementing a pre-kindergarten program at each of our elementary schools. Initial program design would include the allocation of one classroom at each elementary school which would house a morning and afternoon session. Given that our district does not meet state poverty requirements to apply for State grant funding, we are currently researching other grant opportunities to support this program. We hope that you will participate in an upcoming survey in early January to respond to the committee's questions and provide us with input regarding your childcare needs.

In closing, I invite you to attend our upcoming concerts in January, which can be found on the back of this newsletter. Have a safe and happy holiday season.

Sincerely,

Lori Orologio
Superintendent of Schools

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Triple C Awards: Going above and beyond

The Triple C Awards honor students, volunteers, teachers and staff members who exemplify our core beliefs and who go above and beyond to make our schools great environments for learning.

Congratulations to our stars from Fairbanks Road School and Churchville Elementary School.


CES Winners: (Front, l-r) Grace Keller, Violet Wanck-Kann, Jude Becker, Grace Hasselberg. (Back, l-r) Assistant Principal Renee Mulrooney, Bonnie Vaughn, Holly Bauer, Kim Conley, Julie McCane, Principal Dave Johnson.

National Honor Society

We are proud to recognize the 97 new members of Churchville-Chili High School’s National Honor Society. In a ceremony on Oct. 28, they were welcomed by NHS officers Zoe Lucyshyn, Lucas Tata, Melanie Burley and Ashley Northup. Each officer spoke of the qualities members must represent: leadership, service, character and scholarship. Also honored at the event was the 2019 NHS Teacher of the Year, math teacher Christian Case.
A big “Thank-you” to our Board of Education!

On Oct. 22, students from our schools got together to recognize our dedicated Board of Education members: Dr. Cheryl Repass, Kathleen Dillon, Kristen Brumbaugh, Mike Grabowski, Steve Hogan, Michael Iacucci, Jonathan Payne, Leon Tucker and Amy Wilson.

The evening began with a preview of the Middle School musical, “Singin’ in the Rain.” (The show hit the stage later in November to rave reviews.) Educators Elise Camp, Jean-Marie Carroll and Stacey Sinclaire directed the performers: Aidan Babcock, Katie Chesher, Madelyn Ciravolo, Caleb Comas, Hannah Doles, Chloe Dykeman, Rudy Fahnhulleh, Kelsey Froman, Erin Hibbard, Skylar Locke, Sloane Miller, Anna Pascarella, Mercy Payne, Silas Payne, Mady Pier, Belle Pimm, Katie Schaub, Kaylen Shauf, Ava Underwood and Melana Willard.

Inside the Student Wellness Advisory Committee

Last year, in response to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the district formed the Student Wellness Advisory Committee (SWAC). At its foundation, the SWAC addresses two state requirements to create an advisory committee for the counseling curriculum and for HIV/AIDS (health) curriculum. The committee has broadened its mission to include advancing the complete mental and physical health of students. The goal is to promote a healthy social and emotional climate within Churchville-Chili schools, giving all students an equitable chance at academic success. The committee includes teachers, counselors, staff and administrators, plus representatives from the Board, community and student body.

One of the SWAC’s first steps was district participation in the 2019 countywide Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). This survey collected self-reported data from high school students on a wide range of wellness topics that included physical activity, emotional health, trauma, violence, bullying, sexual behavior, distracted driving, and drug and alcohol use. The committee is currently reviewing and analyzing the results. They will use other district-collected data on absenteeism, chronic health conditions, nutrition, school discipline and safety plans to make recommendations on counseling goals and health curriculum.

“We are looking at physical health, mental health and social emotional learning (SEL) factors to get a clearer picture of what is best for the whole child,” said Director of Curriculum, Assessment and Professional Development Sue Witter. “We’ve had informed impressions before, but the data is now confirming, or in some cases, re-prioritizing, our decisions and directions. The data is giving us a solid baseline for judging improvement as we go forward.”

The counseling team began incorporating insight from the YRBS survey into their curriculum almost immediately.

“This is the first year for the committee and we are still at the beginning of the process,” said Director of Pupil Services Nicole Livingstone-Neal. “We want our community to know that we are very aware of the complicated challenges students face. We are committed to providing the supports they need to become well-rounded, successful, happy, healthy individuals.”
Teacher Jodi Piontkowski’s first-grade class at Chestnut Ridge School sat in the school’s makerspace, the Open Mind Zone, and faced a lineup of bright blue Dash™ Robots. The classmates were eager to communicate and interact with the little machines. They were ready to become the youngest students in our district to learn computer programming basics.

Why has writing computer code become so central to education that even the littlest learners in our district are acquiring the skill?

“Coding is empowering for elementary school kids and it teaches them how to think logically,” said Instructional Coach Andrea Lynch. “As they get older, there will be great career opportunities in computer science, and many more in related STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) fields. Students with coding skills will have a competitive advantage when applying to colleges and for many lucrative jobs.”

Not every student will go into a STEAM career, of course, but technology is everywhere. Understanding and negotiating the digital world will be key for all of them.

Back in the Open Mind Zone, the CRS first-graders made their robots move forward, backward, right or left by creating combinations of simple, drag-and-drop command blocks on their iPads. Lynch and Piontkowski introduced them to coding terms, like sequence, loop and algorithm. After working through the basic challenges, students wrote step-by-step programming to help their robots navigate mini-mazes they had made for them. Their success in the task was dependent on practicing a variety of valuable life skills: listening and focus, collaboration and resilience, logical communication and organization, creativity and problem-solving.

“The skills students need for coding are the same that they will need for everything else in life,” said Lynch. “We want to build a strong foundation for learning these things as early in their education as possible.”

Students learn in diverse ways and at their own pace. For many students, sometimes the best way to understand math is to simply take a slightly different approach. Fairbanks Road teacher Anya Pastecki, along with Instructional Coach Andrea Lynch, designed a more visual way to understand multiplication. After reviewing the multiplication tables with her students and carefully explaining how multiplication works, the class took a short break from math. Pastecki introduced her students to little robots called Ozobots®. They were enchanted with how easily they were able to program the bots to follow a path and perform simple actions, like turning, stopping or spinning like a small torpedo.

After this confidence-building success, the students were ready for their next math challenge. In a large chart full of numbers, they chose a multiplier and then programmed their bots to travel to products of the multiplier. For instance, for a multiplier of 10, a bot would need to traverse a path from 10 to 20 to 30 and so on. At each multiple, students instructed their robot to stop and perform a fun action, complete with flashing colored lights.

“Visualizing tough concepts and building in little rewards along the way to keep students interested can make learning math easier and actually enjoyable,” said Pastecki. “They are more likely to remember what they’ve learned this way.”

Making math more fun

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**Excitement in ELA**

The key to understanding literature is being able to identify the author’s worldview: the theme behind the story. Sixth-graders have been exploring theme this year in ELA, learning how to recognize many of the universal messages behind great stories. Their work culminated recently with a new kind of exercise, a class “breakout” challenge.

The activity was based on the popular escape room concept, with a special twist. Students were presented with a situation: They needed to escape from the dangerous Fairytale Forest by reading classic fables, identifying the themes and then working as a team to find clues to open several locked boxes.

Designed by teacher Lockley Platt and Instructional Coach Andrea Lynch, the challenge began with small teams reading stories like “The Ugly Duckling” and “The Little Mermaid.” Readers then matched their story with a simple theme, like “Goodness and purity will always conquer evil.” After several additional steps involving puzzle pieces, logical thinking, creative intuition and collaboration, the clues led to combinations needed to open the locks and escape the Forest.

The new lesson was shared with another sixth-grade teacher, Margaret Assenato. Her ELA class jumped into the task with enthusiasm, each reader eager to contribute an insight or idea. This was their second experience this year with a breakout, and upon reflection, many said that the earlier encounter helped prepare them for success.

Assenato said, “Young people are more likely to remember abstract concepts if they are attached to an engaging experience like this. It is great to watch the interaction and teamwork as the students work their way through the discovery process.”

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**Middle School students have learning on the brain**

Everyone learns differently, and seventh-graders in MS Career and Technical Education/Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) classes are exploring their own brains to find out why. They are studying the concepts of mindset and learning style to better understand and optimize their own individual methods of learning. In the process, the students had some fun creating “brain hats” to visualize the physical areas and functions of the brain. Later in the school year, they will again put on their custom-made thinking caps in science class, to go into further depth about the human brain and how it functions in the body.

FACS teacher Nancy Amory took a basic idea and turn-keyed it to involve her fellow FACS teachers, Deanna VanEenwyk and Amanda Lydon, as well as colleagues from the middle school science department, teachers Chris Davis, Paula Hickey and Karen Stefl. The cross-subject collaboration is resulting in a much richer and more immersive learning experience for students.

Students get a better understanding of fixed and growth-oriented mindsets, changeable ways of thinking that determine our outlook on life. They consider a number of situations to determine whether a visual, auditory, tactile or mixed learning style is best for them. They then learn how different areas of the brain, like the cerebellum and frontal lobe, control every aspect of who we are.

“It’s tough to be a teenager,” said Amory. “You are constantly judging yourself on how smart you are, or how you often don’t succeed at things right away. It’s empowering for kids to know that they all have different strengths, and can find different ways to learn. We teach them to turn negative thoughts into positive action with the word ‘yet.’ ‘I can’t do it — yet.’ ‘I’m not good at this — yet.’ All of this information will be useful to students as they progress through their academic careers, as well as in their own personal lives.”

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**Bright futures in sport**

Congratulations to (l-r) seniors Sophia Podszebka, Kayla Wiest and Andrianna Gruttadauria – all of whom signed national letters of intent to pursue their sport of lacrosse at the college level. Gruttadauria will be joining the St. Bonaventure University NCAA Division I Bonnies. Podszebka will play for the Roberts Wesleyan College Division II Redhawks. The University of Indianapolis’s Division II Greyhounds will welcome Wiest to their lacrosse team in the fall.
New tools at our schools: self-driving robots

Director of Operations and Maintenance Joe Valenti manages a team of dedicated groundskeepers and janitorial professionals who keep our campuses attractive, clean and safe. This year, staff members at the high school and middle school have been testing cutting edge tools — self-driving robots — to reduce repetitive tasks, increase productivity and better utilize their time and expertise.

Outside, robots have been tested in several of the high school's six enclosed grassy courtyards. Head Groundskeeper Scott Wohlers said, “Our two robotic lawnmowers are virtually silent and less distracting for students in surrounding classrooms. They are safe, easy to maintain, economical and very effective in small spaces. Each courtyard used to take an hour to mow by hand. Now groundskeepers spend that time on challenging projects that require their full talents. We’d like to expand the robot program for next year.”

Inside the building, James Ryan, assistant director of buildings and grounds, has been testing a different kind of robot: one that helps night cleaning staff optimize their time and efforts. Every evening, the floor cleaning robot travels its programmed routes through the high school and middle school hallways. Janitorial staff monitor the machine, but can focus their attention on other tasks. Again, safety is paramount. Should the machine encounter a person or obstacle, it stops immediately and a staff member is notified.

“The robot saves about 15 hours of boring, repetitive labor per week,” said Ryan. "That is time that workers can better spend on more complex assignments. Very few places in Rochester are using self-driving robots like these yet; the district is ahead of the curve. Our schools are better places to learn and more rewarding places to work, thanks to this.”

Saints nab Section V Class B1 title led by Coach of the Year Kim Eichas

Congratulations to our boys volleyball team, winners of the Section V title for the second consecutive year! Guided by 2019 Coach of the Year Kim Eichas, our #1 seeded team pulled off a 3-0 win over Spencerport. Further congratulations go out to our Section V Class B All-Tournament team selections John Bagley, Griffin Stella and Joe Wollke, who was also named the MVP of the tournament.

This marks the second consecutive year in which Eichas has been named Section V Coach of the Year. She led the Saints to a 17-1 record during the regular season while capturing the Monroe County Division 2 title for the second consecutive season. She then advanced the #1 seeded Saints through the sectional bracket to capture the Section V Class B1 title.

Exploring careers at NGA

More than three dozen professionals representing 13 different career paths as varied as cybersecurity and veterinary science visited Ninth Grade Academy on Nov. 26. Students each had the opportunity to investigate four different presentations over the course of the morning to see what is involved in entering and excelling in those fields. We’re very thankful to all the businesses and individuals who have made this day possible for our students for over a decade.
Churchville-Chili kindergarten registration information

Preparations for the annual kindergarten registration are already underway for the 2020-21 school year. As a reminder, children must be 5 years old on or before Dec. 1, 2020 to be eligible for enrollment in kindergarten in September 2020. You must register your child at the elementary school that he/she will be attending during the following dates and times, no appointment necessary.

**Monday, March 9 – Tuesday, March 10, 2020** for those who will be attending Churchville Elementary School. Hours for registration are noon - 6 p.m.

**Monday, March 16 – Tuesday, March 17, 2020** for those who will be attending Fairbanks Road Elementary School. Hours for registration are noon - 6 p.m.

**Monday, March 23 – Tuesday, March 24, 2020** for those who will be attending Chestnut Ridge Elementary School. Hours for registration are noon - 6 p.m.

Kindergarten packets for eligible students will be mailed out to residents in February 2020. If you have not received a kindergarten registration packet in the mail before the open registration dates, and your child is eligible to attend kindergarten in September 2020, please contact the registrar at 293-1800, ext. 2041 or registrar@cccsd.org. Packets are also available online at www.cccsd.org/Registration

If you cannot attend the open enrollment, appointments can be made after April 1, 2020, by contacting the district registrar at 293-1800 extension 2041. Please bring a completed packet with you to your enrollment appointment.

**Important reminder for emergency closings**

When hazardous weather requires us to close or delay school on any given day, there are several ways we inform families. School closings and delayed starting times are announced over local radio (WHAM 1180) and television stations (Rochester TV channels 8, 9, 10 and 13). Parents should listen to these stations and check the district website www.cccsd.org, app, Twitter account – @CCCSDtweets – and the Churchville-Chili Central School District Facebook page for detailed information. If no report is heard or posted, it can be assumed the schools are in session and are opening on time.

The district will also continue to utilize the Instant Connect notification system. Instant Connect enables administration to record, schedule, send and track personal voice messages to thousands of parents and staff members at the same time.

The district uses the information in our Student Management System (Infinite Campus) to contact multiple phone numbers for each family simultaneously. To correct contact information for your family, call the District Registrar at 293-1800 ext. 2041.

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**2019-20 Winter Concert Series**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 Senior High School &amp; Middle School Orchestra</td>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 Churchville Elementary Third Grade</td>
<td>6:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 7-8 Chorus</td>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 5-6 Chorus</td>
<td>6:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 7-8 Band</td>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
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