

Hello from the Canterbury Public Schools team!

April Town Newsletter

CPS Mission Statement: In collaboration with our community, the Canterbury Public Schools will develop, foster, and cultivate all students to their highest potential, through rigorous academics within a safe, nurturing, and respectful environment.

Central Office Happenings as reported by Superintendent Dr. Lois C. Knapton

It continues to be a pleasure to serve Canterbury Public Schools as your Superintendent. We have completed our budget process and with the help of the monthly communication meetings with the First Selectmen, the Board of Finance chair, the Board of Education Chair, and myself, we have been proactive in once again presenting a budget that is feasible for all parties, and moves the district and town forward while being conservative with taxpayer funds. However it is not without some pain. We did lose one teaching position in this budget process and we are now developing a plan to cross that hurdle. In late April and May, be sure to attend the upcoming budget hearings and the town vote. Thanks to the security grant we were awarded in which the state pays a portion and the school pays a portion of the grant, this winter, we've been able to upgrade our security features in both buildings. We upgraded security cameras, we implemented a keyless entry system at both buildings, and purchased a bus radio communication system. We are currently awaiting approval from the state, of our submitted technology grant. In following the CPS Strategic Plan, it is imperative that we solidify our technology infrastructure so we can put technology at the hands of our teachers and students on a daily basis, truly integrated technology into our daily instructional practices.

The BMS Principal Advisory Selection Committee started meeting in February; this committee consisted of two parents, two teachers, two administrators, two Board of Education members and myself. We had some great candidates apply. With over 30 applicants, we narrowed the pool down to seven interviewees, and then down to two finalists. After a site visit to the finalists' school, the committee unanimously advised that Ryan Earley be moved to the BOE as the final candidate. On April 21, the BOE will make their final decision. If BOE approved, his start date will be July 1, 2015. Mr. Earley comes to us from the Jaffrey- Ringe school district in New Hampshire.

As always my door is always open and I welcome communications with the town and its families. My phone number is (860)-546-6950. Feel free to contact my secretary to set up an appointment if you have any questions and /or concerns regarding education in Canterbury Public Schools.

Canterbury Elementary School, submitted by Sarah W. Cary, Principal

Canterbury Elementary School welcomes spring! This is a time of transition for the school in which we bid a fond farewell to two veteran teachers and complete our academic work with our students.

We have many plans for growth this spring and summer. Just this week, we welcomed our youngest new students for screenings for PK classes in the fall. In May, we will reflect on our professional development this year and plan our collective goals for next year. In June, we will celebrate the successes of our students in many forums. We will thank our retiring teachers, Mrs. Frishman (Grade 3) and Mrs. Baker (Grade 1) for their service. In July, we will focus on our community and school and brainstorm ways to assess current needs for our school. Please come join us on Tuesdays, any time between 10 am - 1 pm at CES on July 7th and/or July 21st to discuss your ideas. In August, we will meet again to discuss how to compete for grants that match our needs.

We have been working as a team to take care of our students. Our primary academic goal has been focused on writing instruction. We have seen marked improvement in students' ability to express an idea or opinion in writing. We continue to increase our access to technology in the classroom. The school, just like Baldwin Middle School, now offers wireless service throughout the building. We continue to focus our efforts towards our district strategic plan goals in curriculum renewal and technology integration.

Canterbury Elementary School is surrounded by community members and parents who often express their praise and appreciation of our schools. Our students are children who are kind and work hard to learn new things every day. Thank you for being such an important part of our community elementary school.

Dr. Helen Baldwin Middle School, submitted by Jane Dion, Interim Principal

Students at Dr. Helen Baldwin Middle School just completed the third marking period. With one marking period to go the end of the year will be upon us before we know it. Fourteen (14) seventh and eighth grade students were inducted into the National Junior Honor Society at a ceremony held April 7. Students were inducted in front of an audience of teachers, family and friends. The teachers are nearing completion of their second year under the new Connecticut State Educator Evaluation plan. All teachers have been observed through both formal and informal observations based on school wide and personal growth goals set in the fall. The SBAC, Smarted Balanced Assessment Consortium, (the old CMT test) testing will start on April 27. Over the course of a two week period each grade will complete a Math, English Language Arts (ELA), Math performance task and ELA performance for a total of four testing sessions. As warmer weather approaches students will be taking field trips to the Boston Science Museum, Six Flags, New York City, and the Norwich Family Entertainment Center, to name a few. We are all looking forward to warmer days ahead as we finish out the 2014-2015 school year.

Pupil Personnel Services, submitted by Jodi Davis, Special Education Director

Recently, legislation added the category "Dyslexia" to the list of special education designations. Whenever changes like these occur, it is important for our staff to receive professional development in order to stay current with the new legislation. A team from the district was very fortunate to attend a workshop at the NEAT (New England Assistive Technology)

Marketplace in Hartford, entitled Dyslexia 101. The information that was presented by the “experts” was very beneficial. The team was extremely encouraged by the validation that Canterbury Public Schools is providing the interventions, evaluations, and instruction that benefits students with Dyslexia. Kudos to all!

As required by law, during the 2013-2014 school year, a team of Canterbury professionals were trained on de-escalation strategies (CALM) through the New England Center for Children. The same team was recently provided with a required annual refresher course in the district. We continue to effectively service all our students with special needs, mostly in the mainstream and in the most effective way possible, to meet everyone’s needs.