

## CANTERBURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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### Report from Canterbury Elementary School November 2019

#### **Climate**

We have had a good start to the year. The students and staff are doing well. We are working hard and supporting each other.

In staff development, faculty and staff have selected learning to extend their growth professionally. In October, teachers and para professionals began their year-long focus in small groups on such topics as social emotional skills, early reading intervention, restorative practices, and curriculum writing. All groups will present to the district at the end of March.

At CES, on the October professional development day, EASTCONN presented a workshop on understanding the emotional escalation and recovery cycle and how to respond to children in need. This workshop was attended by groups across the district and appreciated for its helpfulness and the wealth of information presented.

Our CES PTO continues to bring great activities to our school. The Kid's Club, a science after school offering, continues to be very successful with over 115 students participating each month. Family Fun Nights continued in October with Bingo Night. This month, we have the Scholastic Book Fair which will be open during parent/teacher conferences. As always, the PTO will offer dinner to our teachers during conferences. In December, the Gingerbread Race returns for its second year on Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>.

The CES Chorus, Grades 3 and 4, will present a winter concert on December 11<sup>th</sup>.

The newly planted rain garden has thrived this summer and fall. The selected plants have bloomed and are doing well.

Our nurse, Mrs. Turner, is collaborating with the Lyon's Club to bring vision screening to our youngest students in PK and K in early December. Mrs. Turner retires in January. Thank you, Nancy, for your dedication to our students and staff! We will miss you.

The PTO continues to give us gifts; the most recent was a sensory walk in the hallway by the cafeteria. Students have the opportunity to frog jump, bear walk, or do push-ups. They are enjoying the walk greatly!

Fire Drills and staff training have been the focus of our safety program this fall. We met as a district to review the Emergency Operations Plan in October. The CES Safety Committee is scheduled to meet in early December.

## **Technology**

CES has 2 Chrome book carts, each with 25 chrome books, which are used regularly by students. The carts are located in the hallways by classrooms to facilitate access.

Students continue to use the LEXIA program in Grade 1 to support phonics instruction. Unfortunately, the cost of this program has increased dramatically.

Our faculty participated in taking the NWEA MAP testing this fall to see what it is like for students. We have begun a Google Classroom for teachers to share professional growth. We hope to share best practices and ideas to meet the needs of our students in a shared space.

## **Curriculum and Assessment**

We continue to seek accreditation from NAEYC for our PK program after our appeal was denied this week. I am meeting with the Office of Early Childhood this month to discuss our action steps towards certification. We are resubmitting our materials to NAEYC currently. These action steps and program review began in July when we received the deferment after our May visit. We have received a grant from the state for support from EASTCONN in this process.

After consulting with Dr. Knap ton and our new Readiness Liaison, Mrs. Frizzell, we have decided to seek certification for only our PK program and not for kindergarten. It is unusual for a school to have the kindergarten as a part of the process and it is not necessary for continued funding from the state Readiness Grant. The NAEYC progress is complicated and ever changing. We believe it is in our best interest to narrow our focus to PK.

Grade 3 and 4 teachers have implemented our new Language Arts program called Journeys which provides instruction in reading, writing, and language development. This program is also used at the middle school and the teachers are working together this year from both schools. Our October Faculty Meeting focused on Math instruction and assessment. Teachers reviewed the digital resources from our math program, My Math. We also reviewed the NWEA MAP test by taking it ourselves! In November, we follow up with looking at the test from the viewpoint of questions. What kinds of questions are being asked? What level of difficulty are they? The middle school will also be engaged in this process.

Our faculty continues to work with Mrs. Danna on curricular units in Math. We have completed our first unit and are well on our way to completing the second two that we planned to finish this first half of the year. Our focus switches to Language Arts in January.



Our student assistance team (SAT) is meeting with families as we continue to design interventions to meet the needs of our students. We have developed new tracking procedures to monitor our communication with teachers to progress monitor our students. Classroom teachers and families join the team on a regular basis to review student progress. Members of the SAT include the principal, nurse, social worker, psychologist, and remedial reading teacher.

The behavioral supports for students in collaboration with EASTCONN has been very helpful. Mr. Barclay, a behavioral consultant, meets with our special education teacher, Mrs. Webster, to provide guidance for students and plans for overall program functioning. This asset is pivotal in providing for the behavioral needs of our young students.

We have begun our new Health Curriculum, approved by the BOE in August. The model allows for instruction by classroom teachers, social worker, nurse, and our dually certified Physical Education and Health Teacher, Mr. Fresco-Hawes. Resources for teachers are available in the staff room and are organized by different topics each month.

Last year we purchased a social emotional program called Second Step for Grades 3 and 4. This program provides lessons on topics such as feelings, empathy, making friends, and communication. It has been used in our school for years, but needed updating from 2004. We were able to purchase the materials for Grades 3 and 4 last spring. The School Readiness Council just approved the purchase of materials for PK through its Quality Enhancement Grant, which provides for Professional Development.

Our district-wide Strategic Plan Committee has met twice since the last BOE meeting. Our focus is on defining high quality instruction and how do we best support that work collectively. What does each part of the system need to do to progress? The group has decided to meet on the professional development days to allow for time on this important initiative.

Respectfully submitted November 11, 2019 by Sarah Cary

# Dr. Helen Baldwin Middle School

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To: Canterbury Board of Education

From: Mr. Neil Rinadi

Subject: October Monthly Report

Date: November 11, 2019

Our third Professional Development day of the year was held on November 8th. Teachers were continuing their work on curriculum which is scheduled to be on-line by July 1, 2020

The Baldwin Middle School Girls Soccer team won the Small Division Championship, finishing the year with an undefeated record. Congratulations girls! Speaking of athletics we are currently transitioning from fall to winter sports. Basketball tryouts have begun and the cheer squad held tryouts all last week.

Recently, our students have had many opportunities for learning outside of the walls at Baldwin Middle School. The 5th grade visited the Pequot Museum on November 7 and the 8th graders were invited by Griswold High School to see their performance of "Alice in Wonderland." The Griswold High School version of the show was outstanding and our students were exposed to a quality drama production. The 7th grade visited the Alton Jones Camp on October 21st for a day of outside team building activities. The Alton Jones Campus is run by the University of Rhode Island. All 8th-grade students have finished their high school tours and students will now begin the shadowing process in the next couple of weeks.

There were no applicants for the .5 music position with the departure of Mr. Beit. Canterbury Elementary School music teacher, Ms. Julia Tackett, will now be a 1.0 full-time music teacher picking up Mr. Beit's general music classes at CES and teaching chorus and band at Baldwin Middle School. Mrs. Kaitlyn Shafer will cover the DHBMS general music classes starting in early December. Until that time Mrs. Joslyn Irza will cover the DHBMS general music classes. The search for a .5 music teacher will continue. It is hopeful that there may be some new music education graduates in January from area Colleges and Universities

Action steps have begun to improve our SBAC scores and identify all student needs regardless of skill level. Mrs. O'Connor and I presented a plan to the faculty that would use some Bulldog Blocks for intervention purposes. All students would be grouped according to their NWEA skills, that correlate to SBAC, with an emphasis to improve all student's skills regardless of their current level. A schedule will be developed and planned implementation is set for the week of November 17th.

DHBMS held a Halloween Dance was held on Friday, October 18th with numerous food donations by parents and a great turn out by students.

DHBMS has initiated school spirit days as "Fun Fridays" in November. Some of the themed days include camo day, crazy dress day, grade by colors, and luau shirt day.

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

Members of the Baldwin Middle School National Junior Honor Society will be servers at the NJHS Covenant Soup Kitchen on November 16th. There will also be a PTO Spaghetti dinner and live auction all to benefit DHBMS on November 16th at 5 p.m.



**November 2019**  
**Pupil Services BOE report**



**Each and every student with special needs is a general education student first. Assume competence in each child.**

**Question:** If you had the power to have every student know one thing when they woke up - what would it be?

**Safety Care:**

Deescalation, restraint and seclusion techniques and procedures will be met by Safety Care Behavioral Safety training this year. Training of four staff members as trainers will occur the week of Nov 12th. They will then train other CPS staff annually.

**Special Education Families Making Connections (aka SEPAC):**

The Special Education Parent Advisory Council continues to manage a "Canterbury Special Education - Families Making Connections" Facebook page. Link is:

<https://www.facebook.com/canterburyfmc/>

The next SEPAC - Family Connections meeting will be in November 15, from 4-6 at BMS. Parents, students, community members, staff and BOE are always invited.

**Special education resource fair is Oct 17, 430 - 7 at CES was cancelled due to weather. Will be rescheduled in the spring. The SEPAC will now focus on a series of professional development activities for staff and families around current topics in special education.**

**Budget:**

Any significant changes to the budget due to student move in/move out are reported to Superintendent.

***Pupil Services vision:***

*Provide curriculum, instruction and assessment in the least restrictive environment resulting in ALL students with special needs, PreK to age 21, achieving success academically, socially and emotionally at their cognitive level.*