

CANTERBURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Celebrations

We celebrated a great site visit from NAEYC on October 23, 2020. NAEYC gives a 3-month window until we get our results.

We are happy to report that the arrival and dismissal routines are running smoothly and effectively.

We are celebrating today that 18 of our parents have volunteered to be Ambassadors for the "Peace at Home Parenting" website. We have orientation meetings this week with parents and Ruth Freeman, the designer of the website. The ambassadors will get to know the website and if they see something they would like to share with others, they will. We are excited about this opportunity for all Canterbury community members.

One of our families generously gave us a treat this month and brought an ice cream truck to CES on a Wednesday afternoon. This gift was greatly appreciated by staff.

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Updates

IReady: We have completed our diagnostic tests across the grade levels that are in school and will complete our assessment cycle with remote students soon. We are now looking at the data from the assessment as the classroom level. Once the students take the diagnostic, they are able to access lessons in reading and math on IReady.

Second Step: Our kick off of the Second Step program is going well. The faculty report that the students really like it. I hear that a kindergarten class likes to sing the song about being ready to learn! The implementation of Second Step will be a large part of our school goals this year. We are currently in the process of designing our annual goals. We also provided a training session for our para professionals on this important curriculum. If we all use the terms, and refer to the concepts in the program, it will be more successful for our students. The posters from the program are posted in classrooms.

Professional Development

We continue to grow professionally in our use of Class Dojo, SeeSaw and Google Classroom. Teachers had the chance to team with Mrs. Giuliano to give the first round of IReady. Learning about how to do it and then having the opportunity to use it gave teachers a chance to feel comfortable in giving the test.

As a school team, we developed a remote schedule, should we go full remote as a school. We communicated those schedules to families.

Upcoming Events

PTO Fund drive for Canterbury Food bank, Canterbury Cares is ongoing. We are gathering coffee, tea, and toiletries.

We plan to participate for the second year in a row, on December 11th, in the CT Children's Hospital's PJ Day for the Kids.

Kids' Lab: We are planning a remote event to CES this month. We are looking to provide a combination of remote opportunities and project based experiences so as many students as possible can participate.

We continue to find and explore new ways of being during the pandemic. We have initiated texting to parents as a way to keep in close contact. Our intervention team, SAT, have gotten numbers that parents can text. Our SAT members are the principal, the nurse, the social worker, and the school psychologist. This method of communication seems helpful to our families. In addition, we have started an Instagram page where our nurse is posting information about the school.

We again re-organized the space at CES to make the gymnasium available for PE and to address other school needs. The custodial staff worked very hard to move items, clean, and set up new areas. Efforts such as these take all of us to achieve. I am very proud of the work that all members of CES have done to ensure that our students are well and are receiving the best experience possible this year.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Cary, Principal

Dr. Helen Baldwin Middle School

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Celebrations:

Students

Last week we wrapped up Spirit Week celebrations with students. We were able to have 5 themed spirit days, including school colors, crazy hair day, and costume day. In addition, the hard work and dedication of Mrs. Evelyn Smith and Mr. Connor Hill paid off when we held a fun virtual pep rally, which was followed by a physically distanced scavenger hunt. All of this culminated in a hallway decorating contest, which was won by our 6th graders! I have received countless parent emails and calls thanking us for taking the time to ensure that our students still have these opportunities to take part in fun celebrations and activities. The smiles on our students' faces made it well worth the time and effort, and I look forward to more celebrations as the year progresses.

Staff

I would like to recognize Connor Hill, our PE and Health teacher. Connor was recognized with the 2020 CT Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance's (CTAHPERD) Outstanding New Professional Award. The association representatives came out to Baldwin on October 21 to surprise Mr. Hill with a plaque and our NJHS students were able to celebrate with Mr. Hill as well. It was a great event and is a well-deserved recognition for a new teacher who has a ton of passion, commitment, and focus on improving our school and his subject for our students.

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Updates:

The first trimester is wrapping up and grades close on Friday, November 13. Although our instructional practices look different than in years past, we continue to focus on improving strategies and access for all students. One item of note since our last BOE meeting:

- I met with all grade-level teachers to begin work on tier 1 instructional strategies. This work relies on the data we have from iReady and provides a clear direction for our staff towards skills that each student needs to develop and work on. Additionally, this data provides grouping suggestions that allow for staff to meet student needs in a manageable

Professional Development:

Although our next district PD is scheduled for January, there are smaller, ongoing learning opportunities that I am working through on an individual basis with my staff. For example, I am working with one staff member who is interested in shifting towards a master-based learning

approach within their classroom. We are working together to understand what this approach looks like and also to develop appropriate rubrics that are student-friendly as well as objective and measurable.

Upcoming Events:

- Friday, November 13, end of trimester 1.
- Parent conferences, Monday, November 23, and Tuesday, November 24.

General Comments:*Climate*

As a school, we are continuing to focus on students' social and emotional learning (SEL). As a way to connect with our remote students, while also taking something off my staff's plates, I have taken on the responsibility for teaching the Second Step lessons to all of our remote students. So far, this has been quite an enjoyable experience and the students seem to appreciate the connection with me.

Schedule Changes

As the year unfolds, we made another small adjustment to the schedule that now allows for all students to safely eat downstairs, rather than in their classrooms. By using a rotational lunch and recess block, every student now eats either in the cafeteria or the gym, with each area being cleaned between each lunch wave. This allows teachers to have one less duty and also for students to have more space while eating, which creates a safer environment. The biggest changes that occurred as a product of this schedule switch are:

- Grade 7/8 specials moved to the first period of the day, and
- Grade 5/6 eats lunch earlier in the day.



Canterbury Public Schools

Pupil Services Office

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Celebrations:

- A small group of faculty from the Pupil Service department met to determine how to most effectively utilize the DESSA to promote social emotional wellness for our student population district-wide. Their efforts resulted in a total of 212 families completing the Devereaux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA). The results of the screener have been shared with teachers and families. Our school clinical teams (School Psychologist, School Social Worker, and School Counselor) are aligning the DESSA results with existing measures through the Student Assistance Team, so that suggestions can be made to support the social-emotional well-being of children who are struggling.
- DESSA results have also been compiled and shared with each school to promote professional goal setting for faculty that directly links to parent ratings of children's emotional well-being.
- The Pupil Service department has been collaborating with regular education teachers to promote Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (formerly known as Scientific-Based Research Intervention). This is a system where assessment data is used to drive strategic instruction for students who need it.
- Collaboration with high schools has begun to re-emphasize critical components as Canterbury students with disabilities anticipate life after high school. Exit criteria from special education, data to support needs for Extended School Year services, thoroughly planned transition activities with the appropriate young adult agencies are all important factors that need a heightened awareness from Planning and Placement Teams in this critical phase of development.
- The Pupil Service Director visited several of our Canterbury student's placed in out of district programs.

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Updates:

- A small group of faculty from the Pupil Service department has volunteered to develop an aligned process from assessment to intervention.
- Members of the Pupil Service department are supporting the use of iReady by helping teachers use the results of the assessment to pinpoint areas of weakness and supply the targeted instruction needed.



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Professional Development:

- Eight staff members (regular and special education, certified and non-certified) are scheduled to attend de-escalation training in the month of November.
- Pupil Service faculty were trained in completing process logs in our IEP management system to increase the accuracy of state reporting.
- Trends from our initial special education data report were shared with pupil service faculty to increase our accuracy in assessment and programming.

Upcoming Events:

- Delivery of progress marks will align with the delivery of report cards. Progress marks are reports of progress toward IEP goals and objectives.
- Information will be shared with faculty, district-wide, about supporting students with disabilities to reach high standards.



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