

# All-in! NEWSLETTER



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## Our Mission

CAIU provides innovative support and services in partnership with schools, families, and communities to build capacity and model courageous leadership to help them be great. #BeGreat

## Our Vision

Recognized as a trusted and influential partner in achieving life-changing outcomes in the Capital Area. #ChangingLives

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**Front cover photo:** (Pictured from left to right) Jen Krause, Jennifer Sciacca, Dr. Andria Saia, and Dr. Sybil Knight-Burney at the CAPT Kick-Off Event on August 17

Do you have a story about staff or students living our values out loud, being great, and changing lives? Share your Giving Voice to Our Values stories, student successes, #begreat and #changinglives moments and more! Email stories for All-In or social media to [communications@caiu.org](mailto:communications@caiu.org).

**Deadline for October All-In: Friday, September 29**

## All-in! NEWSLETTER

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All-In! Newsletter  
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**Please like us on social media!**





# The Ingredients of Belonging



*Andria Saia*

Dr. Andria Saia (she/her/hers)  
Executive Director

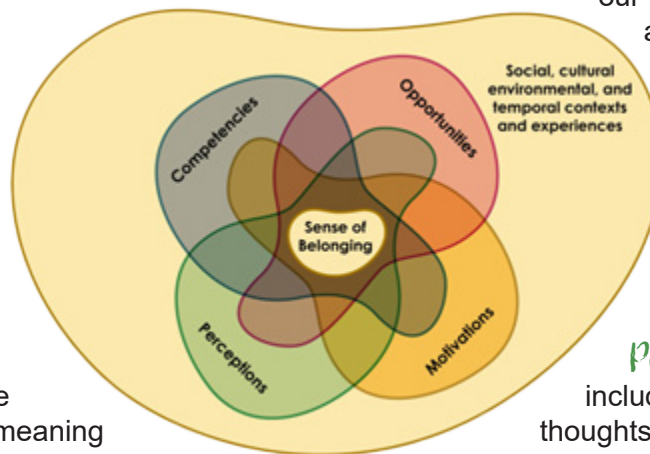
The work we are engaging in around belonging is likely the most important work we can do. I feel strongly that it is a game-changer for education, where we are struggling with the mental wellness needs of students, seemingly inexplicable violence, and a desperate need for meaningful connection in a world where social media is a poor, but ubiquitous, substitute. Belonging is a “you know it when you feel it,” but otherwise often fleeting sensation. More often we know we are missing it, when, as author Zadie Smith describes, it feels like a giant game of musical chairs, and you are left with nowhere to sit.

A recent meta-analysis of belonging research led authors to identify several crucial components that are part of the social systems around us: Competencies, opportunities, motivations, and perceptions. The good news is these components are influenceable and can be fostered and strengthened, meaning we can absolutely make a difference for ourselves and others.

*Competencies for belonging* refers to a group of skills and abilities that are needed to connect and experience belonging. The ability of individuals to relate to others, connect with their cultural heritage, form a sense of identity, and connect to school and other places are all made possible by their skills. These competencies also support people in identifying and meeting social norms, as well as with cultural values and the ability to demonstrate respect to a particular place. These skills include the ability to regulate one's emotions, resolve conflict, and demonstrate empathy and kindness. We sometimes refer to these skills as “soft skills.”

*Opportunities to belong* include the availability of groups, individuals, places, times, and spaces in which belonging may occur. Is a person joining groups or engaging with others? Hobbies, sports, recreation, and chances to learn are all opportunities to belong. The ability we have to connect with people is meaningless if there are no opportunities to connect.

*Motivation to belong* refers to the desire or want to belong. At a core level, as a human being, we are hard-wired with the need to belong, and yet our motivation to act, like taking advantage of opportunities to belong, vary among individuals and throughout our lives. We may want to belong but do not have the motivation because of individual characteristics and the context that our individual lives reflect.



*Perceptions of belonging* include an individual's personal thoughts and feelings about their experiences of belonging. An individual may have abilities, opportunities, and the motivation to belong yet feel like their belonging needs are not met. Consciously or unconsciously, most people determine whether they belong or fit in with others around them all the time. In this instance, we may not feel like we belong, so we withdraw, which compounds the lack of belonging. Often the first feelings of belonging we need are paradoxically those that we need to find within ourselves.

Ultimately, belonging is being with and relating to ourselves and others, and even to the world around us. We can influence this relationship for ourselves and others, making ours a place where everyone can feel they belong. 🍏

# The Capital Area Pathways to Teaching Have Launched



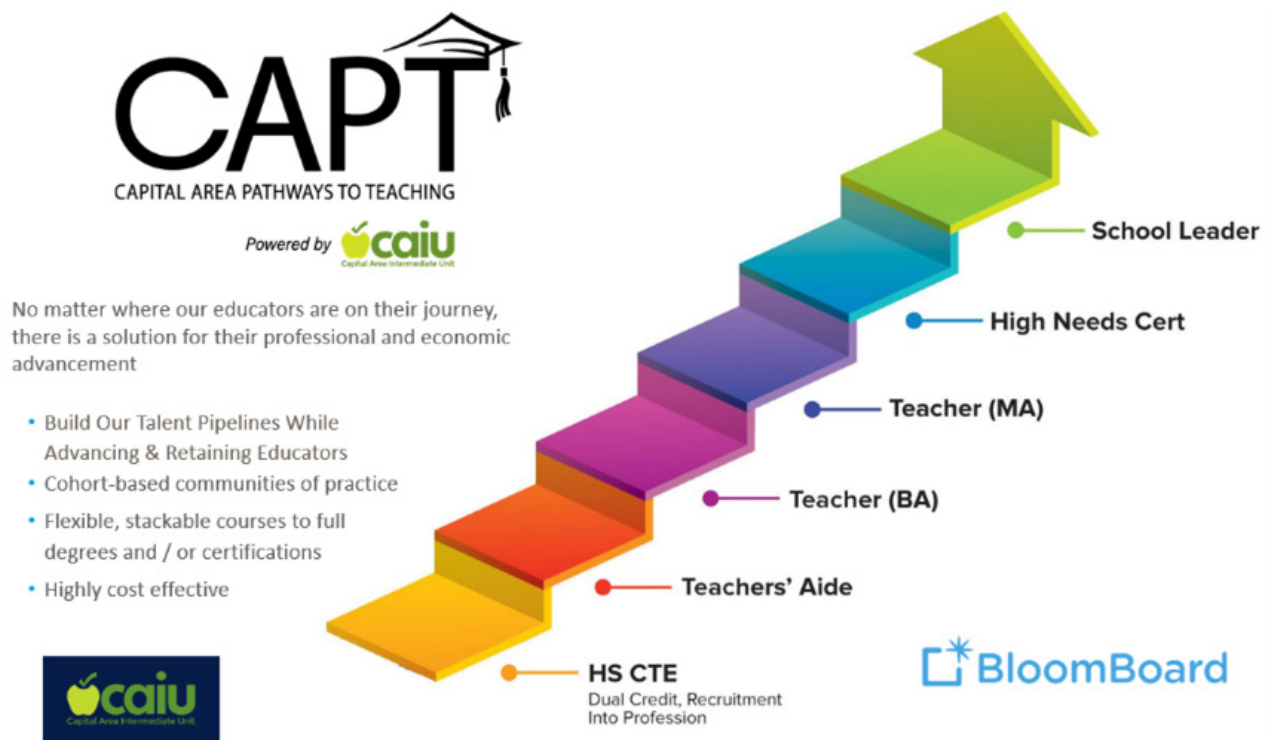
By Dr. Andria Saia, Executive Director

The Capital Area Pathways to Teaching (CAPT) have launched and I am so excited to tell you about the new opportunities!

**Why create something new?** The statistics around new educators joining the ranks of our teachers are daunting: Just slightly **more than 4,000 teaching certificates issued in 2022; down from more than 16,000 a decade ago**. At the same time, **more than 20,000 emergency certificates were issued to fill the gap**. Quoting Albert Einstein, “We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them,” so now is the time for an innovative solution.

*“We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.”*

Meeting the needs of schools for teaching staff means understanding the issue. The teacher workforce is considered hyper-local, meaning that teachers generally work within 15 miles of their home. This requires that the solution be hyper-local as well. There is no more local an answer to the teacher shortage than looking to the support staff who already work within our schools, however, just tapping our paraprofessionals to be teachers isn't enough. If the traditional pathway met the needs of our paraprofessionals who want to become teachers, they already would be on their path. Our innovative solution must also address the barriers to accessing a career in teaching. According to the research and the survey of more than 500 paraprofessionals, the two greatest barriers were time and money. CAPT seeks to provide programs that are designed as the ultimate life hack, allowing staff to upskill their careers while getting paid! The program is also cost-effective to districts, costing less than any other traditional program. We have partnered with BloomBoard, several higher education institutions and school districts, as well as two other Intermediate Units to create a pathway to teaching for any paraprofessional, no matter where they are starting from. 🍏





### First Pathway: Associate's Degree (AA)

Designed for those who have not yet earned a post-secondary degree The AA will take practicing paraprofessionals with some or no college credits and provide them with the pathway to a 62-credit degree in Early Childhood and Elementary Education. This program is delivered in a mix of competency-based courses and virtual synchronous/asynchronous classes. We have partnered with HACC to make this first step towards a degree and teaching certification a possibility. This program can be completed in two years or less and is funded by the employer.



### Second Pathway: Bachelor's Degree (TAP)

Also known as the Teacher Apprenticeship Program, this pathway provides practicing paraprofessionals (with an Associate's degree) the opportunity to earn college credit, which can lead to a fully-accredited Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education or Special Education and ultimately teacher licensure in Pennsylvania. Participants will complete 20 skills-based courses (60 credit hours) while working in a classroom. This learn-by-doing program is designed for current paraprofessionals with regular access to students. Participants will be required to create artifacts from their classroom practice and upload them to the platform for assessment. This program can be completed in two years or less and is funded by the employer.



### Third Pathway: Initial Teaching Certification and/or Master's Degree

Designed for educators currently teaching with a Bachelor's degree in a field other than education, this program provides the opportunity for them to earn an initial teaching certification and/or a Master's degree in an education related field, all while working in a classroom. Participants must have regular access to students and will be required to create artifacts from their classroom practice and upload them to the platform for assessment. This program can be completed in 12-18 months and is funded by the employer.

## What's Next?

As you can tell by the steps, we have plans to expand! The next anticipated pathway is one for students that will allow interested high school students the ability to start their Associate's Degree in Early/Elementary Education while they are still in high school. This program will also include a work based learning experience in which these students will work as paraprofessionals in their districts and get paid to practice what they are learning. This way we will continue to have a pool of paraprofessionals as they become certified teachers.

## What Else?

Masters in Curriculum and Instruction courses for use in induction. New teachers requiring induction will earn the credits they need for level II certification as a part of induction in participating districts. More details to come.

## Anything Else?

Heck yeah! Through this partnership, we can support staff seeking leadership certifications in a work-embedded, competency-based model as well. From high school student to leader, we can provide an efficient, cost effective pathway for staff to upskill their careers in education. And this is only the start!

### Interested in Learning More About One of These Pathways?

Scan the QR code to learn more.





Making It Easier To Do Business With Us

## The Synergy of Human Resources and Business Collaboration

**Blake Wise**

*Manager of Human Resources*

**Daren Moran**

*Director of Business and Operations*

In today's fast-paced and dynamic education landscape, successful organizations recognize the paramount importance of a harmonious collaboration between their human resources (HR) department and core business functions. This strategic partnership not only streamlines operations but also enhances the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the business. By aligning HR practices with business practices, educational entities can create an environment conducive to achieving long-term success. At the CAIU, we have a strategic goal to make it easier to do business with us. The HR and Business Teams took this goal and ran with it in 2023.

Efforts to simplify doing business extend beyond external operations. Collaborative HR-Business efforts also focus on internal functions, such as employee development, retention, and efficient systems. When all of these are aligned, our staff should be able to focus on providing innovative support and services in partnership with schools, families, and communities to build capacity and model courageous leadership to help them be great.

A compensation management tool was the first system identified to help address our recruitment and retention goals. The idea is to ensure that we are paying a fair wage for the work being performed within our regional market in similar roles. We started by taking a look at our job descriptions to make sure they included an accurate reflection of the duties being performed as well as the education experience required to be successful. Then we found Payfactors, a system that curates salary survey and job description data from hundreds of sources and allows us to compare apples to apples information related to our salary ranges. The ability to refresh this data on an annual basis will ensure that we are keeping pace with market pay trends, providing our staff with confidence that we value their contributions, and retaining top talent to provide exceptional service to our member districts.

The next system we tackled was our Human Resources Information System (HRIS), which includes functions such as payroll, benefits, recruitment, and time & attendance.



We discovered that our systems were fractured and did not communicate with each other creating enormous amounts of manual keying and calculations, all of which can lead to errors. The goal was to find an all-in-one solution that would help automate both business and Human Resources functions. That solution is Paycom. While still in the early stages of implementation, Paycom will allow for a smoother onboarding process of new hires, online annual benefit enrollment, electronic submission of supplemental work hours as well as administrative efficiencies in the way of tax submission, Affordable Care Act Compliance, and employee benefit communication with our carriers.

The Business Team had the opportunity to speak at the opening day for both school age and early intervention teams about the new process for submitting reimbursements. The implementation of Informedk12 will make the submission of many CAIU forms quicker and easier for everyone involved. You will no longer have to attach the forms to an email and then forward to your supervisor and be curious about the status of the submission. You will now be able to check the approval status of your form online using a custom link that will be emailed to you after you submit your form. The new forms allow for approvals to be done online which will speed up the time it takes to process your request.

The Business Team will continue to look at utilizing Informedk12 to streamline form processing. As of this article, we have the employee reimbursement, purchase requisition, college credit approval, college credit reimbursement, request for invoice, and independent provider payment and reimbursement ready for submittal in the new system.

“

***The collaboration between human resources and business is a cornerstone of streamlined operations and sustained success.***

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The collaboration between human resources and business is a cornerstone of streamlined operations and sustained success. By working together to align strategies, objectives, and practices, these two integral functions pave the way for a harmonious and productive work environment. The outcomes of such collaboration include a skilled and motivated workforce, efficient business processes, and a culture of innovation. As education entities continue to navigate an ever-evolving landscape, the synergistic relationship between HR and business is indispensable in making it easier to do business and achieving lasting growth. 🍏



# Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

**We are so excited** to announce the opening of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library for children living in Dauphin and Perry Counties.

The Capital Area Intermediate Unit, through one of its non-profits, the Center of Advanced School Teaching and Learning (CASTL), has partnered with Catherine Hershey Schools for Early Learning (CHS) to bring our vision of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to life. Like the CAIU, CHS is focused on building strong educational foundations to pave the way for lifelong success. They serve children from six weeks to age 5 by providing weekday education and care while connecting families with the resources they need to succeed—with all costs covered. CHS Hershey welcomes 150 children this Fall and CHS Harrisburg will open in 2024. For more information, visit [chslearn.org](https://chslearn.org).



Catherine  
Hershey  
Schools  
*for early learning*

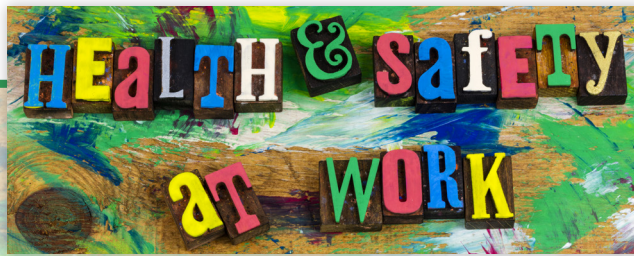


The Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a **free book gifting program** that sends all children aged birth to 5, a free book, monthly.

All you have to do is sign up here:

**SIGN UP**

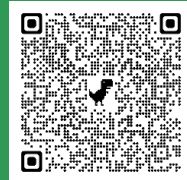
Looking ahead, CASTL's goal is to expand our coverage and open Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in Cumberland and Northern York Counties. **Do you want to support us in this effort?** Please visit [caiu.org](https://caiu.org) (click on the Community tab and find the CASTL page).



## Points2Ponder

- ▶ How do you define Situational Awareness?
- ▶ How does it play a role in your day-to-day work?
- ▶ How do you apply it in situations where safety may be compromised?

Scan the QR code to learn more!



REFER FAMILY  
OR A FRIEND

FOR AVAILABLE POSITIONS VISIT  
[WWW.CAIU.ORG/EMPLOYMENT](https://www.caiu.org/employment)

AND WE'LL  
PAY YOU **\$250\***

\* YOU WILL RECEIVE A **\$250.00 AMAZON GIFT CARD** AFTER  
THE NEW EMPLOYEE HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY ONBOARDED.



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FOR DETAILS**



# Mission Moments



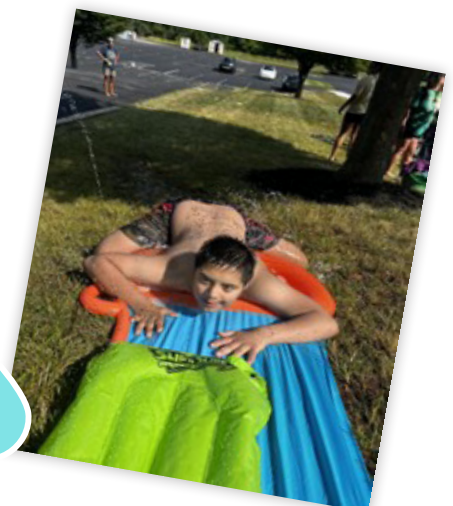
The Autism and MDS teams worked together on a beginning of the year team building activity building cup towers. This activity helps to build skills such as *encouragement*, *leadership*, and *communication*, which were keys to success as the teams worked toward a common goal.

They will need to rely on these important skills throughout the year as the challenges become more difficult and complex.



## Extended School Year Was *A Blast!*

Students celebrated the end of ESY with some fun in the sun and a little water.



# Welcome *New Hires!*



**Heather Bravener** is a School Psychologist. She has seen Daughtry in concert 11 times with her mother and sister.



**Nicole Bryan** is a PCA at Hill Top Academy. She is a CNA, twin, and Gemini.



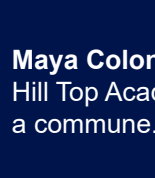
**Natalie Buffington** is an EPP at Northern Christian. She loves the beach.



**Madyson Burkey** is an EPP at Hill Top Academy. She is from Colorado.



**Brianna Cekovic** is a PCA at Hill Top Academy. She is a mother of 2 kids.



**Maya Colonna** is a Social Worker at Hill Top Academy. She was born on a commune.



**Allison Conrad** is an ESL Teacher. She recently moved back to the area from Bogota, Columbia.



**Jesse Cristoforo** is an EPP at Conewago. He has had his poetry published.



**Katelyn DeCarlo** is an Occupational Therapist. She has 2 children and 2 dogs.

**Rebecca Guzzo** is an EPP at Conewago. She has lived in 4 different states - PA, AZ, NC, and TX.



**Alison Hall** is a School Psychologist at various locations. She has 2 children and a fox red lab named Gryffin.



**Ashley Hoppes** is an EPP at Middle Paxton Elementary. She loves to ski.



**Alyse Hunt** is a Teacher at CAELC. She is a twin.



**Wynter Jones** is an Educational Consultant at the Enola office. She loves going to the beach with her family.



**Deborah Kearns** is a Social Worker. She hiked through Nepal/Everest Region with her husband, Mark, and adult son, Kyle.



## Training and events

The Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU) hosts numerous innovative events and conferences throughout the year. Our team of consultants, staff, and specialists values and supports lifelong learning.

All events and conference offerings are available in the [Frontline Registration System](#) or in Eventsforce.

Check out our [Events & Conference](#) page often to see what opportunities are available to you!

Here are some of our upcoming trainings:

**10/11/2023 - [ELD Networking \(Virtual\)](#)**  
Audience: Any educator of Multilingual Learners

**10/16/2023 to 1/23/2024 - [Classroom Management Support Plan: Creating a Positive and Engaging Learning Environment](#)**  
Audience: District Coaches, Principals, Teachers

**10/19/2023 to 3/5/2024 - [LETRS for Administrators](#)**  
Audience: Administrators - Central Admin and Building Principals

**10/24/2023 - [CAPT Mentor Network - September and October Cohorts](#)**  
Audience: CAPT Mentors

**10/26/2023 - [Instructional Technology Collaboration \(ITC\)](#)**  
Audience: Instructional Technology Specialists, Coaches and Integrators, STEM teachers, Media Specialist/Librarians or anyone involved in Instructional Technology at a district or school level

**Check out CAIU Service Projects and Forms here!**





**Lauren Lane** is an EPP at Conewago. She loves to travel.



**Dakota "Cody" Miller** is an ESL Teacher. She lived in Chile during college.



**Brandi Mitterling** is an EPP at Northern Christian. She lives with her husband and 3 children.



**Tishania Mosley** is a PCA at Hill Top Academy. She enjoys/ loves children.



**Grant Page** is an EPP at Hill Top Academy. He is great with technology.



**Amanda Pendleton** is an Educational Consultant at the Enola office. She loves to travel. She lived and worked in Paris, France for 3 years and has been to all but 1 continent.



**Maggie Read** is an EPP at Middle Paxton Elementary. She is a licensed Esthetician.



**Nancy Rhoades** is a School Psychologist. She is a 1st generation U.S. citizen.



**Trista Rhoads** is a S/L Pathologist at Hershey Primary. She's getting married in January.



**Amanda Sickler** is an EPP at Northern Christian. She has lived in 3 different countries and taught in 2.



**Cassidy Smith** is a S/L Pathologist at West Shore. She rides horses.



**Claire Smith** is a LTS School Counselor. She was on the Regis and Kelly talk show for her 13th birthday.



**Jennifer Sturtevant** is a S/L Pathologist at the Enola office. She loves to cook.



**Kyla Sullivan** is a Floater Teacher at Hill Top Academy. She plays 6 instruments.



**Sierra Trunick** is a MHW at Hill Top Academy. She has 2 guinea pigs named Pretzel and Nugget.

YOU'RE *one of* US NOW

# Compliment Corner!

#ChangingLives

Here at CAIU we like to brighten someone's day with a compliment. CAIU Compliments is a Capital Area Intermediate Unit initiative that allows CAIU staff the opportunity to share words of thanks, tout successes, or tell a story about what makes us great as an organization, our people.

## #Dedication

### Kate Klopp, Inclusion Consultant

Kate constantly goes above and beyond during the work day as well as preparing materials and researching effective strategies on weekends and in the evenings. She is a constant source of strength, calm, organization, and knowledge. Recently, she has agreed to teach an Early Childhood Specialized Classroom on top of her already crowded schedule. We are so fortunate to have her in our program.

- Jamie Gordon, Behavior Consultant





# SAVE THE DATE!

JOIN US in doing all the good we can for those we serve.



## Fall fest

A Fun Family Event!

**October 28, 2023 11am-3pm**  
**55 Miller Street, Enola, PA**

A **FREE** family-friendly event to celebrate our staff, families, and community. All proceeds benefit **Champions for Children**.  
Come dressed in your favorite costume and be part of our trunk-or-treat costume parade! All activities are free, and food can be purchased from food trucks.

Balloon  
Artist

DJ Music

Face  
Painting

Flea Market  
& Crafts

Food  
Trucks

Goat  
Petting

Inflatable  
Activities

Pumpkin  
Painting

Trunk-or-Treat

The Capital Area Intermediate Unit provides expertise in the development, coordination, and delivery of a diverse array of services and educational programs for children in Cumberland, Dauphin, Perry and Northern York Counties.

Capital Area Intermediate Unit  
717.732.8400 | [info@caiu.org](mailto:info@caiu.org)



 **No Rain Date**