



# CUFSD NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2024

HOME OF THE HAMBLETONIANS

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FROM THE  
SUPERINTENDENT

CATHERINE  
O'HARA

October brings Board of Education Appreciation and National Principals Month. We extend our gratitude to BOE President Kim DiCurcio, Vice President Caroline Negersmith, trustees Diane Arnett, Lisa Hines-Johnson, Rosalie Pena, and to our Principals, Mrs. Boesch and Mr. Flanagan, for their dedication to professional growth, student success, and continuous improvement.

On October 31, CES advanced professional development focused on literacy, while CA collaborated on planning future Advisory sessions and explored effective integration of Artificial Intelligence as a teacher resource and future learning tool. Our CA Parent Athletics Panel and CUFSD Parent Advisory Panel meetings were held this month. Thank you to our parent representatives for your partnership in creating positive change and to all our families for your continued support in helping our students achieve their best!

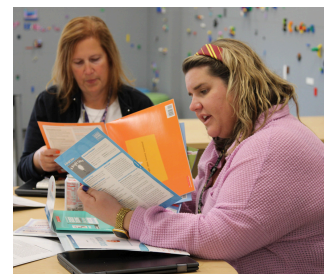
## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Faculty attended a professional development (PD) session October 31 that included a discussion about artificial intelligence with hands-on testing of popular platforms. PD sessions, which align with the second of the district's goals for the 2024-25 school year, keep teachers equipped on the latest topics in education and lead to positive educational outcomes for Chester students.



Director of Technology & Data Management Daniel Svarczkopf (pictured above) guided teachers on using AI to streamline instructional practices, support differentiated learning and enhance student engagement.

The PD session continues a larger district conversation about AI that began in September. The district is gathering input from teachers, staff, and other stakeholders for a collaborative approach to exploring the use of AI in schools. This will eventually lead to a Board of Education policy for responsibly integrating AI in the district.



In another PD session at Chester Elementary School, literacy specialist Eleanor Terrell walked teachers through ways to utilize the new Scholastic Literacy K-6 curriculum. It offers personalized learning tools for independent reading, including a new leveled bookroom to support small group guided reading instruction.

[Read the full story here](#)

## IMPORTANT DATES

**November 8**  
End of First Quarter

**November 11**  
Veterans Day - District closed

**November 13**  
SEPTSA meeting

**November 14**  
PTA meeting

**November 15-16**  
Fall drama

**November 19**  
PTSA meeting

**November 20**  
Board of Education meeting

**November 21**  
Half-day for students;  
Parent Teacher Conferences

**November 26**  
Half-day for students;  
Parent Teacher Conferences

**November 27-29**  
Thanksgiving recess



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FROM THE  
CA PRINCIPAL

JOHN  
FLANAGAN

Chester Academy has had a busy October. On October 22, Chester Academy proudly hosted the Red Ribbon Week kickoff ceremony. Over 12 school districts, representing 19 buildings from grades 6 through 12, participated in the event. Special thanks to Mrs. Cuomo for leading the planning efforts, and to everyone who contributed to making the day a tremendous success.

On October 7, Chester Academy held its first Advisory of the 2024-2025 school year, with the theme "Everything is Possible." In November, our students will be exploring the mindset of "Passion First." Through this mindset, students will analyze what truly drives them and discover how to align their goals and future aspirations with their core values and unique strengths. Essential to this is creating dreams that are authentic, and aligned to our core values. Our next Advisory is scheduled for Monday, November 4.

On October 9, the Board of Education approved this year's Senior Trip to Orlando, Florida. The trip will take place March 21-24, with students staying at Universal's Cabana Bay Resort. Our seniors will enjoy three days at Universal Studios Parks and one day at Disney Parks. We're excited for what promises to be an unforgettable experience!

As we near the end of the first quarter on November 8, I encourage you to reach out to your children's teachers, counselors, or administrators with any questions or concerns.

## Chester Academy hosts Red Ribbon Week kickoff event for students across county

Students throughout Orange County flooded the Chester Academy auditorium rocking red apparel, anticipating a morning with educational activities and engaging conversations for the Red Ribbon Week kickoff event at



Chester Academy on October 21. Stephen Hill, founder of Speak Sobriety, spoke to students about his personal hardships with drugs and alcohol and how he overcame his struggles. Hill talked about his sobriety journey and how his family and friends helped him overcome his addictions with the audience. The kickoff was held in partnership with the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council of Orange County. [View the full story here!](#)

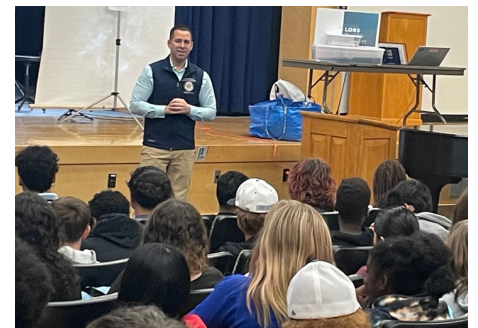


## NHS inducts 13 new members to chapter

The newest members of the National Honor Society (NHS) at Chester Academy were on stage, passing the torch and lighting candles to commemorate their induction on October 16. NHS recognizes and promotes honor, scholarship, service, leadership and character. [Read the full story here!](#)

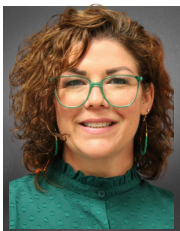
## CA hosts state rep, bank officials

New York State Representative Brian Maher spoke to Chester Academy's eighth grade students and John Maggi's economics class about his role as an assemblyman, his time as mayor of Walden and supervisor for the Town of Montgomery, as well as what it was like working with State Senator Bill Larkin and his team. At the end of his October 16 presentation, students asked insightful questions about Maher's career.



Also, Mr. Maggi's Financial Literacy class students received financial advice during a visit from Selina Nelson-Reilly and Doug Sternemann of M&T Bank in Monroe October 14.





FROM THE  
CES PRINCIPAL

MARY KATE  
BOESCH

October has been an exciting and eventful month at CES! We kicked off the month with our highly successful STEAM Night, where students and their families explored hands-on activities in science, technology, engineering, art and math. We were thrilled to receive overwhelmingly positive feedback through our ParentSquare survey. Thank you for your participation and support!

We held our very first school wide PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) assembly on October 30th. This event celebrated the amazing behavior and accomplishments of our students as we work together to create a Responsible, Respectful, Ready and Safe school environment.

On October 31st, we held our annual CES Halloween Parade! Students were invited to wear their costumes and enjoy a fun and festive day together. It was excellent to see so many families attend the parade and cheer on their children and the CES staff.

Our fall-themed field trips have been a wonderful addition to the month, giving students opportunities for hands-on learning while engaging with family and community members.

We've visited pumpkin patches and farms which have enriched our students' understanding of the fall season in the Hudson Valley.

Thank you for your continued support in making this month so memorable!

## CES students celebrate Halloween with parade



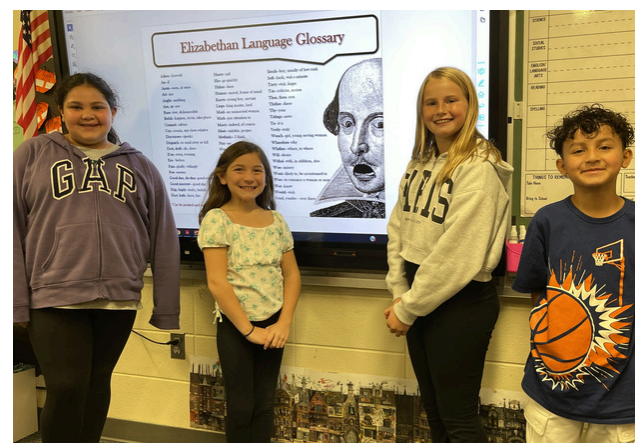
Students dressed in costumes pranced around the Chester Elementary School parking lot, waving to their loved ones during the Halloween Parade.

[See the photo gallery here!](#)



## Innovative teaching, learning of Shakespeare

Chester Elementary School students in Pamela Cinque's fourth grade class are learning about playwright William Shakespeare in unique ways that help students overcome anxiety about learning the subject. The lessons are part literacy, part read-aloud, part history, part drama to create the learning experience. [Read the full story here](#)



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