



CUFSD NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2024

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FROM THE
SUPERINTENDENT

CATHERINE
O'HARA

As we celebrate this season of gratitude, I'm thankful for the dedication and collaboration that define our Chester community. Our teachers, staff, administrative team, Board of Education, parents, families and community all play vital roles in supporting student success.

Building on the district's first PreK-12 vertical alignment of course descriptions, our teachers are creating unit overviews through storyboarding while evaluating Next Generation-aligned programs, exploring Artificial Intelligence in education, and delivering differentiated instruction. iReady and NYS Assessment data presented at the Nov. 20 board meeting highlight our commitment to data-driven continuous improvement.

Partnerships with parents and families remain essential to student success. Thank you to our students for their valuable input on the Climate Survey, which drives continuous progress in our schools. Together, we are fostering growth, accountability, and achievement.

Wishing you and your families a wonderful Thanksgiving!

CONTINUING VERTICAL ALIGNMENT OF CURRICULUM

The goal of vertical alignment in curriculum is to ensure a seamless progression of learning across all grade levels, providing students with a strong and consistent foundation to build upon each year. The recently published PreK-12 course descriptions marked the first phase of this ongoing process.

The district has now moved into the second phase of its vertical alignment initiative. During the Superintendent's Conference Day on November 5, teachers collaborated to begin storyboarding content for each grade level, sequencing units across content areas and courses. This multi-year effort aims to develop a comprehensive PreK-12 curriculum roadmap, aligned with District Goal 2 and accessible through the district's [EduPlanet21 platform](#).



Chester Academy honors veterans in special ceremony on Nov. 8.

Student Climate Survey

Students participated in a survey, designed to provide valuable feedback on their school-wide experiences focusing on a welcoming and inclusive environment, academic and social pathways to success and personal mindset & growth. The results will be used to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement. This will guide targeted efforts ensure all students feel supported, valued, and empowered to succeed.

Website calendar improvement

The CUFSD Parent Advisory Panel discussed improvements to the district's two new communication platforms, ParentSquare and the CUFSD website, at its first meeting. One suggestion was to add the school schedule (letter or number days) to the website calendar. Days will be adjusted following a school cancellation or snow day.

TUESDAY
NOVEMBER

26

CES Day C / CA Day 3

🕒 all day

[Read More](#)

Thank you CUFSD
Parent Representatives!

IMPORTANT DATES

December 4
Board of Education
meeting

December 5
FASFA Information Night

December 9
MS Winter Concert

December 10
HS Winter Concert

December 11
SEPTSA

December 12
PTA

December 17
PTSA

December 18
Board of Education
meeting



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FROM THE
CA PRINCIPAL

JOHN
FLANAGAN

November is moving quickly and there has been a lot going on at Chester Academy. As we prepare for our Thanksgiving recess, I would like to remind everyone that school will be closed from Wednesday, November 27, through Friday November 29. When students return to school on Monday, December 2, it will be an Advisory Day. The month's Advisory mindset for December is, "We are Connected."

We look forward to seeing everyone at Parent Teacher Conferences. As a reminder, there is a conference on Tuesday, November 26 (afternoon only). When we host afternoon conferences, students will be scheduled for a half day of school.

I would like to congratulate the cast and crew of Elf the Musical Jr. for a highly successful performance on November 15 and 16. They did an excellent job in bringing the holiday feeling to Chester Academy a little early this year.

I would also like to acknowledge the tremendous success that the Chester Academy Varsity Football team has been experiencing this year. On Friday, November 15, the Hambos defeated Dover 42-12 to win the Section IX, Class C Championship!

Freshman swimmer Siel Johnson qualified for the NYSPHSAA Championship meet, competing in the 50 meter freestyle race. Siel ended with a 25.42 second finish in the preliminary round. Congratulations on your accomplishments this season!

Chester Academy puts on production of Elf Jr. The Musical

Chester Academy Drama Club members were singing and dancing in their performance of Elf Jr. The Musical. Shows ran on Friday, November 15 and Saturday, November 16.

Congratulations to everyone who made it a success.

Extracurricular activities such as the drama club provide valuable learning experiences that students can apply in and out of the classroom. It allows students to develop social and problem-solving skills, help build their self-confidence while expressing themselves creatively and help them with discipline and time management.

[View the full story here!](#)



Students create pan flutes using AutoCAD



Chester Academy students took creativity and collaboration to the next level. Students from Ms. Hyseni's seventh-grade general music class worked alongside juniors and seniors in Mr. Rodman's SUNY Oswego CAD class to design pan flutes using AutoCAD.

Inspired by pan flutes from around the world, the student collaboration exhibit not only the students' love for music and technology, but also showcase innovation and teamwork. The seventh-graders sketched their ideas on paper and the older students are bringing those designs to life using CAD software.

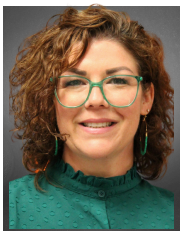
A tasty adventure in reading



Seventh grade students at Chester Academy traveled through the makerspace, viewing a variety of books in an exciting Book Tasting activity. Students explored genre-themed book spreads to search for their "just-right" reads.



[View the Q1 honor roll here!](#)



FROM THE
CES PRINCIPAL

MARY KATE
BOESCH

November has been a month of achievements and school/community spirit at CES!

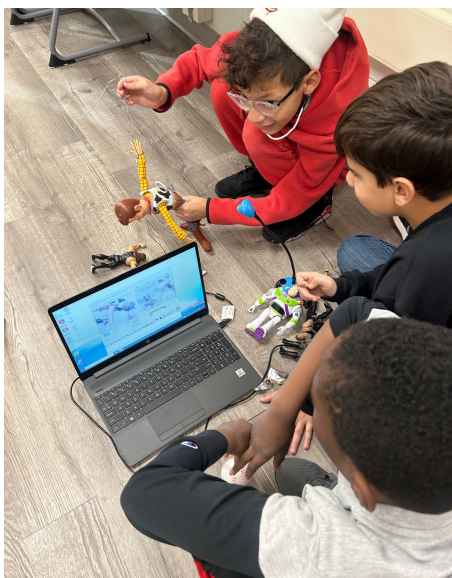
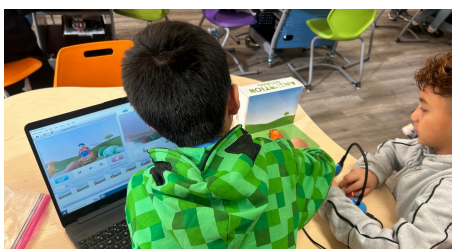
We're excited to share that our school collected 1,000 pounds of plastic film over the past year for the NexTrex challenge, earning CES a brand-new Trex Buddy Bench. This accomplishment was made possible by the CES Green Team Committee, who is now collaborating with the K-Kids Club. The two groups worked together to assemble the bench. In the coming weeks, they'll decide the best spot on campus for this great addition.

Our 5th-grade class representatives have been selected! These students will meet with me throughout the year to set goals, lead initiatives, and gather input from their peers on key decisions. They'll help plan end-of-year celebrations, including the party theme, final week activities, and the design of 5th grade grad walk shirts.

Gratitude Spirit Week was another highlight in November, focusing on giving back. Students enjoyed themed dress-up days while donating items for local animal shelters, food banks, and clothing drives. Thanks to their generosity, many donations made a meaningful impact in the community.

Thank you, CES families, for your ongoing support in creating a school culture of kindness, leadership, and environmental responsibility. Together, we make CES a great place to learn and grow!

CES students create stop motion animations



Emily Daunicht worked with her fourth and fifth grade classes and Ilyse Grunes' class to create stop motion animation films. Students worked in teams to create animations using a variety of materials. Each grade level is given a different general theme and students were able to work cooperatively to create their own vision. Fifth grade students are loosely basing their movies off the idea of Toy Story. Students were able to bring toys from home, or borrow Mrs. Daunicht's toys to create a little scene of the toys exploring the MiniMakerspace. Fourth grade students are working within a small backdrop using LEGO bricks to create a scene.

In addition to the bricks, students were able to use dinosaurs and cars to create their movie. Creating an animation engages students in blending creativity, technical skills, and critical thinking as they craft stories, design characters, and master motion techniques to bring ideas to life.

Ms. Quackenbush receives Educator of Excellence award from NYS English Council

Rebecca Quackenbush was recognized by the New York State English Council as one of their Educators of Excellence on October 18. This prestigious award celebrates her exceptional commitment to students and the art of teaching. Congratulations, Ms. Quackenbush!

She also delivered an inspiring presentation titled "Making Books: So the Journey Begins" as part of her work with the Hudson Valley Writer's Project.



CES students learn all about Veterans Day

Members of the American Legion Auxiliary, a nonprofit organization that is one of the nation's most prominent supporters of veterans, military and their families, stopped by Chester Elementary School on November 7. During their visit, they spoke to third, fourth and fifth graders about what Veterans Day is and what they can do to honor veterans.

They provided cards for students to create messages for veterans thanking them for their service to our country. The American Legion Auxiliary will be stopping by CES once again to pick up the cards and deliver them to veterans on behalf of CES students.



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