



Canton Public Schools

Opening Minds ... Transforming Lives

Spring 2021



Giving Back and Spreading Cheer



Students and staff at the Canton Public Schools have not let the pandemic prevent efforts to give back and strengthen community bonds. At top members of the CHS LEO Club prepare flowerpot kits for local seniors. At left, Canton Intermediate School art students made this and other banners for essential workers. Above: The Canton Intermediate Student Council organized an effort to help with the Jack Bannon Turkey Trot. See story on page 6.

Our Mission

Our mission is to prepare independent, productive, respectful and responsible citizens who contribute to an ever-changing world. We pursue continuous improvement while honoring our strong educational legacy and traditions. We unite with families and the community to provide challenging educational experiences that promote the intellectual, physical, social and emotional potential of our students.

Our Vision

As a leader among schools and a source of pride in our community, the Canton Public Schools enrich the present and shape the future of its students by opening minds and transforming lives.

Our Values

Collaboration ~ Kindness ~ Integrity

We partner with our students, educators, staff, families and community to: Work together with open minds, creativity and innovation; Look for ways to treat others with kindness and respect; Do our very best, be honest and hold each other accountable.

from the superintendent

Over the past year our world has changed dramatically. We have witnessed racist and discriminatory events take place across our nation, which give evidence for the need to change. As a society and in our schools we are facing these new challenges brought about by the global pandemic and these blatant examples of racism. In light of these events, we have continued to work to establish increased cultural respect, by cultivating greater understanding throughout our school



Kevin D. Case

community of the concepts of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Equity has been the foundation of everything we do in the Canton Public Schools. For the past several years, each school developed an Equity Action Plan to address issues related to access, experiences, and outcomes for students at the school level. With the racist events occurring throughout the country over the past year, the Canton Public Schools formed a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Guiding Coalition, a group comprised of over 40 stakeholders, whose purpose this year is to develop an equity statement, including core beliefs and stances related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This statement will be completed by June and will be presented at the June 8th Board of Education meeting. This statement will serve as the equity lens through which we will identify and address inequities and biases. Our District Leadership Team, including Board of Education

members, are currently reading and discussing the book, *Unconscious Bias in our Schools: A Developmental Approach to Exploring Race and Racism* written by Tracey Benson and Sarah Fiarman. We are also undertaking the process of auditing our policies, procedures, and curriculum to address any inequities that exist. Each school also has an Equity Team comprised of trained staff to identify issues and develop plans to address the identified inequities at the school level. We are committed to continuing to create a safe environment for all students and to ensure that no student is discriminated against based upon race, gender, age, physical ability, family structure, sexual orientation, or economic

status. We need to continue to work together as a community to address all forms of inequity, including racism. We reopened school this year following months of thoughtful planning with the following goal in mind: Upon the reopening of the Canton Public Schools, our students will learn and achieve in a healthy, safe, emotionally, and intellectually supportive school and classroom environment. Our students will learn through high-quality engaging instruction delivered by highly qualified educators. I am excited to let you know that due to the efforts of our outstanding staff and partnership with our families and community, we were able to meet this goal. On the following pages of this newsletter you will see examples of the exemplary work of our school community that makes the Canton Public Schools a lighthouse district! Thank you for your continued partnership and support as we strive to finish the school year strong!!

from the board chair

I hope this newsletter finds you enjoying the spring season with your families. It's always wonderful to see the flowers bloom, hear the birds singing and watch the daily changes as the trees leafing bring the sign of new life and hope. As everyone knows, the Covid-19 pandemic has brought many challenges to our schools this year-- we had to decide whether to have in-person learning, remote learning or a hybrid of each. We had to learn new



Julie Auseré

protocols for maintaining social distance, new cleaning procedures for health and safety in our buildings, and new ways to teach curriculum given all the above protocols. These challenges have been real, it's been hard, but I'm happy to say our district has risen to those challenges. We have kept our students K-6 in an in-person learning model since the end of September and 7-12 students in person since the middle of October. This is such a huge accomplishment where many districts across our state just returned to in-person learning in April and where districts across the country still have not returned to the classroom. I feel it is important that we as a community recognize and acknowledge all of the hard work Superintendent Case and his administrative team have done this past year to give our

Canton students that in-person learning. I feel it is important to acknowledge the hard work of the teachers in the classroom, who have come into the school building each day working diligently to accelerate student learning. I feel it is important to acknowledge the hard work of the distance learning teachers who are providing that digital learning experience for those students whose families have chosen to keep them remote for health reasons. I feel it is important to acknowledge the

custodial staff who have kept our buildings clean and safe for learning to occur. I feel it is important to acknowledge our students and how they came to school ready to learn, whether it was in person or through a computer screen. I feel it is important to acknowledge our families who have been at home supporting their students and helping them learn. It's been a huge lift for everyone and I know as we approach the final weeks of school, we will finish strong and celebrate all of our accomplishments. This newsletter will give you just a glimpse of all the hard work happening in our district. On behalf of the Canton Board of Education, I thank you for your continued support of our schools. I wish all of you a strong finish to this school year and a wonderful summer break.

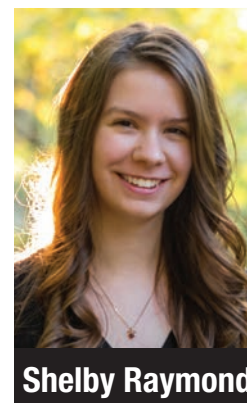
Canton Schools have a unique sense of community

All my life, I've heard teachers, principals, staff members—adults in the district—praise the fact that here in Canton, there really is a sense of community and how truly unique that is. All my life, I've appreciated their words, but didn't necessarily believe them. Sure, I knew that we were a small school in a small town, but having only grown up in Canton, I couldn't really judge whether their words held merit, if Canton really is that special or not; or if that was just something they said in an attempt to get us to bond as students. This past year, as I worked on searching for and applying to colleges, I, like every other student, had to figure out what they were looking for in a school.

Some things were easy to check off: small-mid sized school, east coast, liberal arts. Other things were a little harder: urban or rural, in or out of state. The one thing I never thought I had to consider, however, was how strong the sense of community was. Like I said, I've only ever known a community that feels like ours, so while college would undoubtedly be different, surely a similar sense of community would still exist, right? Ha. Wrong. Definitely wrong. So many of the colleges I looked at didn't have that same sense of community I had always known, and many didn't feel like they had a sense of community at all. That's when it finally clicked for me. That unique sense of community here in the Canton Public Schools actually is unique.

Looking back at my 12 years here, it's painfully obvious. The May Day celebrations in Cherry Brook, singing and dancing with our grade and performing for our parents and guardians who came to watch. Pumpkin Mania and the Ellis Island Simulation in 4th grade; the Civil War Reenactment in 5th grade; the Ancient Greece Festival in 6th grade all at CIS. In the middle school, having the three teams (hybrid, seven, and eight) either play kickball or participate in a Lip Sync Battle. In the high school, Spirit Week every year, with lots of school-wide assemblies throughout the year. There

were so many community-minded and community-building events through my entire experience at Canton, and they really did work to build the unique community that all of the adults have claimed exists. Now that I'm leaving Canton (University of Vermont, here I come!), I can say that I finally do believe what all of those adults have been saying. And furthermore, I'm grateful that I've gotten to grow up in this close knit community we have. Moving forward, I know it will be impossible to replicate the experiences I've had here, so instead I will keep searching for the communities I can find, and throwing myself in wholeheartedly.



Shelby Raymond

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Guiding Coalition

Group builds on past efforts in Canton Schools

Equity has always been an important emphasis in the Canton Public Schools, but there's no doubt that the high-profile cases of the past year and a half have sparked debate and self-reflection in every facet of society.

"Equity has always been an important part of the work at Canton Public Schools. Our goal is always to support each and every student to be able to unleash their potential," said Jon Bishop, the District's director of Learning and Innovation.

The district's newly formed Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Guiding Coalition, which began meeting in December, will help guide the district to further that goal and take an overarching look at important issues and potential barriers or areas of bias, such as race, gender, socio economic status and disability.

"Equity has really been the foundation of everything we do in our district," said Superintendent Kevin D. Case, noting that Equity Action Plans have been in place at each school for approximately seven years.

School officials were also deeply moved by the high-profile cases that shone an even greater spotlight on these issues. "We've always thought equity was important and every school develops specific steps every year to address equity," Case said. "And then last May with the death of George Floyd and the other incidents of racism around the country, BOE chair Julie Auseré, and I and the board felt it was important to establish a district guiding coalition to focus on diversity, equity and inclusion."

Auseré added that it became clear that the district needed to tackle the issue on a higher level to ensure consistency and alignment across the entire spectrum of education in Canton. And as the district looks at its strategic planning it's important to align that with the equity

work, she said.

"While each school had individual equity plans in place, diversity, equity and inclusion has become such a topic within our culture and our county that it was important to step back and create this guiding coalition to develop a district-wide approach, so we can make sure that it's all coordinated and that it's all cohesive across the schools so that we're all moving in the same direction," she said.

The idea of a guiding coalition is to assemble a diverse group of stakeholders who can both "lead and sustain change," as noted by author Dr. John Kotter.

The coalition involves some nearly 50 members, pulled from all aspects of the school and greater community, including students, recent alumni, teachers, parents, administrators and town elected officials under the guidance of facilitators Kerry Lord and Patrice Nelson from the non-profit Connecticut Center for School Change.

The district's past work in such areas as equity working groups in each school, anti-bias training and cultural proficiency awareness serves as a basis for the facilitators, whom Bishop said are highly trained educators and administrators, to help the district move forward.

That, of course, involves input from a wide range of stakeholders and some tough conversations but always with respect and understanding of one another. Establishing ground rules, or working agreements, to ensure civility was one of the first steps the coalition took, noting aspects such as: Stories are personal and not up for debate; Respect the stories that are told; Take a humble position and engage with others by assuming best intentions.

In broad terms, the coalition is assess-

ing any and all issues that affect equity access, experience or outcomes, with the goal of recommending ways to guide implementation and strategic planning while eliminating any consistent gaps in the district.

More specifically that involves a deep dive into collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data, examining policies and procedures, honing in on specific growth opportunities, looking at the root causes behind any inequities and researching best practices and unique initiatives.

The work will then result in recommendations to the Board of Education, followed by a plan to monitor the success of the changes.

Currently the group is focusing on providing the Board of Education with a draft equity statement by the end of the school year, a critical step in moving forward, as it will serve as a "lens" that the district looks through with everything it does.

"As a lens, everything that we have done and will do is going to go through that to help us think about each and every situation," Bishop said. "Are we being equitable with this? Are we supporting people?"

"It's not about looking at everyone in the same way or giving them the same thing," Bishop added. "It's about seeing each and every one of our students as individuals, understanding the uniqueness of their backgrounds and experiences, responding to their needs, ensuring they see themselves and others in the work they do, and providing the just right support and challenge." The group, for example, will help audit curriculum and while a separate task force is looking specifically into the issue of the Warriors mascot, the equity lens will serve as a guide in that conversation as well.

The coalition is also discussing areas such as community outreach, communication and focus groups and how those will weave and help inform the coalition.

Each month the board will also receive an update, Case added.

"We're really looking for this coalition to help guide the BOE strategic planning and help us identify what inequities there are throughout our district," Bishop said.

Staff training at the beginning of next school year will also be influenced by the coalition.

"This is allowing us to all have a common definition of equity, of racism of discrimination and so forth," Case said, "So it's important we all know the terms and the definition of the terms as we engage in what could be very difficult conversations. This process is allowing us to do that."

And it's not lost on administrators just how deeply the country has been divided and the controversy that some conversations and decisions could generate.

"We have trained facilitators with a great deal of knowledge and they have worked successfully in other communities which is why we brought them on board," Case said.

And ultimately the coalition will help Canton achieve the 5 Cs that make up the district's vision for its graduates. Bishop said, "When we take all the things that we know about education, all the things we hear and value from our community, all the things we understand about our kids, we can take our equity statement to be able to use as that as a filter to help direct all of our efforts into really being able to support our students to become those creative thinkers, communicators, collaborators, critical thinkers, and compassionate citizens."

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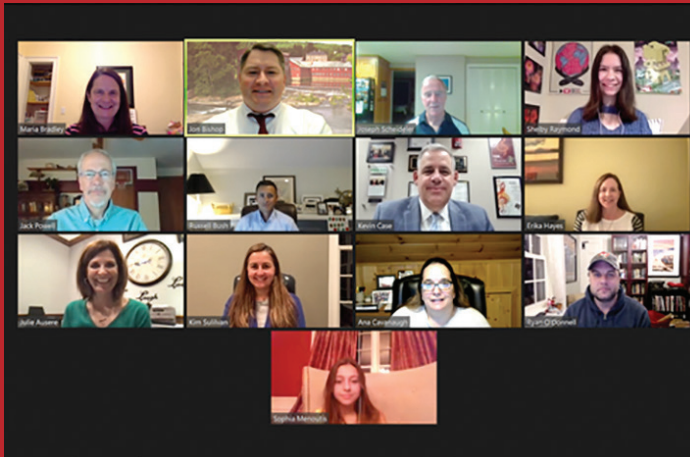
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Important dates

- June 2 – Senior scholarship Celebration - 6:30 to 8 p.m., In-person and live-streamed.
- June 7 – 6:30 p.m., CHS Athletic Awards, live-streamed
- June 9 – 5 p.m., 6th Grade Celebration – drive through event
- June 10 – 3 p.m., 3rd Grade Car Parade
- June 10 – 6 p.m., 8th Grade Promotion Night
- June 11 – 6:30 p.m., Graduation, at CHS and live-streamed
- June 12 – Substance Free Graduation Party
- June 13 – noon, Graduation Rain Date

Social and Emotional Learning

How will social and emotional learning (SEL) benefit the parents and students in the Canton Public Schools? Superintendent of Canton Schools, Kevin D. Case, began to seriously explore this question five years ago. Case understood the urgency of integrating this learning into traditional academic curriculum and began to map out a multi-layered plan for students and educators at every grade level. “We want all students who graduate in our system to be effective communicators, excellent collaborators, critical thinkers, problem solvers and compassionate citizens,” said Case. “When you look at our Vision of the Canton Graduate, this would not be possible without the implementation of social and emotional learning.”

As defined by CASEL (the Collaborative for Social and Emotional Learning), SEL is “the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions.”

In 2015, Case was introduced to Deene Morris, Canton resident and principal of Inspire Leadership LLC (inspire-leadership.com). Morris is an EQ and Psychological Safety coach and facilitator with clients nationally, as well as an adjunct faculty in this field of study. (For clarity, SEL is the term used in K-12 and EQ is the term employed in the business world. The goals and objectives are identical). From the start, Case and Morris recognized their shared values and a fruitful partnership began.

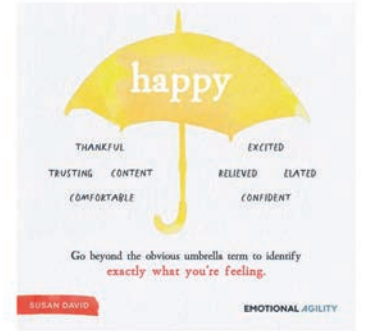
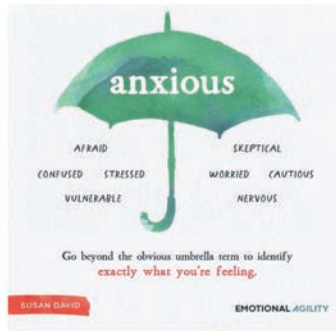
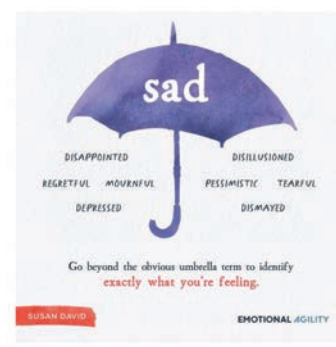
A key component is the Canton EQ (Emotional Intelligence) Academy, in which now more than 100 educators in the Canton Public Schools have participated. “Teachers have the opportunity to learn more about themselves, their own engagement with emotional intelligence and then how to directly apply this into meaningful strategies and activities for our students,” Case said. This year, the district not only continues its training through the EQ Academy but also offered additional professional development training, and educational sessions for parents and the Class of 2021, all facilitated by Morris.

“SEL skills are not fixed, static or predictive. They also are not trait-based. SEL skills are teachable, learnable, behavioral and observable, and offer us a wonderful opportunity for engagement and greater fulfillment,” says Morris. By actively incorporating SEL training for educators, Superintendent Case

is simultaneously providing students a foundation for lifelong learning and success. Case notes that the younger students become familiar with these skills, the greater their potential for self-management, success and happiness as they navigate their adult life.

Morris states that many people think SEL means being kind, sensitive and empathetic. While these are critical skills, she notes that SEL also helps us build and sustain rewarding relationships, communicate effectively, influence and persuade, manage conflict, bounce back from stress and make better decisions. In the EQ Academy, Canton educators cover all this and more in multiple, two-hour workshops. “It is pure joy to work with Superintendent Case and the educators,” says Morris. “Kevin is open and honest about his commitment to EQ and personal growth, and his modeling invites the educators to be equally open, curious and engaged. The learning and insight to action application is rich and immediate.

The EQ Academy begins with emotional self-awareness, and Morris notes it is the foundation upon which all other skills flourish. “Think of a big box of crayons. We want a lot of colors to draw a fabulous picture. Same with our feelings. We want all colors because the more we can recognize our feelings, the more data we gain. For example, you or your child feels angry or irritable today. Okay, so what’s beneath that? A good practice is to identify 2-3 additional feelings. Maybe you are actually frustrated, confused or disappointed. Whether pleasant or unpleasant, there is no good or bad emotion. While pleasant emotions feel great, unpleasant emotions inform us how to better care for ourselves. Another related SEL skill is self-regard, which is our ability and tendency to like ourselves, in full light of our strengths and weaknesses. Morris notes that for most of us, COVID has challenged our self-regard. Yet, she continues, “this skill is directly correlated with our happiness and well-being, so we want to take it seriously. We want to practice it ourselves and model and support this with our kids.”



Inspire Leadership LLC. 2021



Source: Susan David: Emoti

In all her workshops, Morris introduces a concept, shares theory, and then invites the teachers to self-evaluate and develop new strategies for themselves and their students. The teachers are curious and invested in this learning, says Morris, and she always learns right along with them. “You can’t reach and teach students if you’re not actively engaging the skills yourself.” For example, empathy is an SEL skill that is often grossly misunderstood and thus not modeled successfully, states Morris. Yet it is core to problem solving. Empathy, notes Morris, “is your ability to put yourself in someone else’s shoes and feel what they are feeling - whether or not you agree with them - and that’s the hardest part!” She observes that we can become so task oriented that we miss rich emotional data to problem solve in conversations.

Morris is often surprised when people think problem solving should be devoid of emotion. She emphasizes that we cannot make effective decisions if we do not recognize our own emotions, and the emotions of others. This is the only successful path to conflict management. This skill naturally leads to the exploration of stress management, resiliency and flexibility and once again, this insight is applied to both the educators and their students. All of SEL falls under the umbrella of psychological safety, which is integrated into all workshops. In its simplest terms, Morris says, this means a culture of rewarded vulnerability where it is safe to be yourself, to speak up, take risks, make mistakes and fail-forward. This is the essence of learning and growth for youth and adults.

Last month, Morris addressed par-

ents in a virtual session on SEL and illustrated that the SEL skills learned in K-12 are exactly what future employers also seek. Case noted that the World Economic Forum specifically identifies SEL skills as critical to job success. “The top 10 skills include problem solving, self-management, working with people, interpersonal skills - all the skills Deene is teaching,” he said. “It’s very practical and that’s what makes it so critical that the Canton Public School emphasize SEL education as well as our academic education.”

This month, Deene will also present a workshop with the high school seniors on Essential Motivator patterns. This learning lens is not prescriptive but provides invaluable insight into core needs, drives, values and talents. Morris notes this is a very popular workshop with her clients at conferences and retreats. “So often we don’t recognize our native talents, and thus we don’t honor what gives us endless energy, or conversely, what drains us. This model provides an insightful road map for graduating seniors to choose a direction that will help them translate their skills to the workplace and life in general.”

Mounting evidence and research concludes that SEL and EQ skills are the foundation for lifelong learning, fulfillment and success, and Morris and Case both heartily agree.

“The more we know ourselves, the better we can shift our perspective to understand others, and we all need a boost of feeling great about ourselves and knowing what we do really well,” Morris said. “Once again, it’s an area that is especially crucial right now.”

The Show Must Go On

It's no secret that the school community is longing for those in-person musical and performance moments. Whether it's the colorful tapestry around the maypole at Cherry Brook Primary School, the astounding progress of fourth-grade band students at Canton Intermediate School, the budding improvisers at a Canton Middle School Jazz Band performance, or the rhythmic complexity, surprising collaborations and sheer talent displayed at any Canton High School musical performance, there's plenty we miss. And let's not forget the crowded hallways, shouts of praise, high fives, and rose presentations that follow events like the spring musicals and concerts. There's much that students, parents and teachers look forward to when life returns to normal, but the music department staff at the Canton Public Schools have not let a pandemic prevent them from taking a creative approach to keeping performance art alive. Conversely, students are eager to participate.

Antonucci is proud of the way her staff has helped create some special moments, despite challenges such as increased social distancing and other COVID-19 related protocols that have been in place this year.

"I think that teaching is incredibly difficult during the pandemic and music teaching has had specific safety guidelines that have been over and above – our distancing has been twice that of other folks," Antonucci noted. "The way that all the music teachers have been flexible and creative and stayed positive for our student musicians has been simply amazing. Every day I am so thankful for all 7 of our music teachers."

Cherry Brook Primary School

At Cherry Brook Primary School, music teacher Samantha Card has stepped in for the beloved Luann Saunders and made the best of each situation. While music and other specials are taught "on the cart," so cohorts of students remain separate during the pandemic, Card has utilized the cafeteria and outdoor spaces to their maximum to keep kids singing and playing music. "The kids love her," Antonucci said. "Regardless of the challenges of teaching music in a pandemic, she is a ray of sunshine. She's just been really remarkable this year and gotten so much fun music learning done despite the fact that specials are on a cart at Cherry Brook and there's a lot of challenges, so she's a superstar." Students at the school have also been able to share their songs, dances, poetry and more via virtual school meetings.

Canton Intermediate School

One of the year's many highlights was Arts in Action, which married visual art with classroom and instrumental music in virtual performance. For that effort, music staff at Canton Intermediate School, including teachers Mark Buonfiglio, Elizabeth DiDomenico and Christian Markkanen, worked with art teacher Deb Costello on a virtual art show with musical accompaniment.

Students selected favorite pieces of artwork and wrote an artist's statement for each piece. Those were then displayed two at a time in a video that featured musical accompaniment. Band performances were arranged based on student cohorts and classroom music students took advantage of available music software to compose original pieces. It involved hours and hours of behind-the-scenes collaboration, arrangement and work from the teachers.

"They really worked so hard to put that together and they will do another one in June, so that's really great," said Rachel Antonucci, K-12 Music Department chair and director of Bands. And one silver lining of such a production is that family, no matter where they live, could watch the production on their computer and can view it again whenever they'd like via a popular Internet video service.

"It was a great experience to work together in terms of the arts and to be able to highlight the students' achievements during this time and share with the families," Costello said.

Canton Middle School/Canton High School

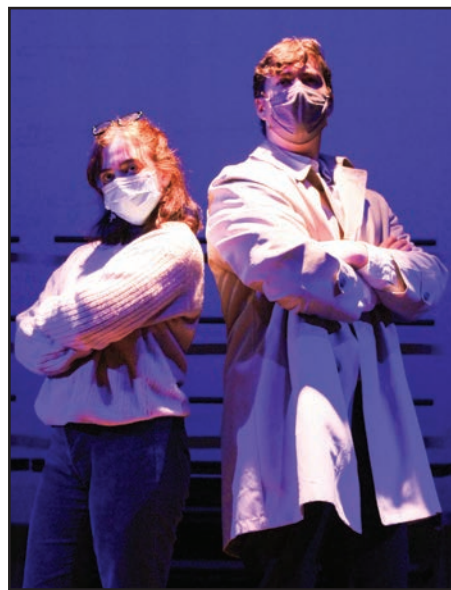
Music technology has moved to the forefront in this virtual performance world. "Alex Slap has really expanded the music technology program and we are so fortunate to have the support to get web based software so the students can be physically distanced," Antonucci said, adding that the software, Soundtrap, allows students to produce music whether the students are in the classroom, at home or some mix of each.

"They can also collaborate with another student sitting six feet away and the teacher can project their work on the screen at a moment's notice," Antonucci said. "She has not missed a beat and they are creating really interesting stuff in music tech both in middle school and at the high school."

Brian Jones, vocal music teacher at Canton Middle and High School, has also produced several virtual performances, such as a special Valentine's Day themed performance of "When I Fall in Love," from the CHS Chamber singers, stitching together vocals and interspersing images of each singer to a romantically themed backdrop. It was



At Cherry Brook Primary School music teacher Samantha Card is using indoor and outdoor spaces to keep kids moving and making music while following COVID safety protocols. Here, third graders are drumming during a music class.



just one of several virtual choir pieces he's produced this year. Jones, also proficient with technology, has bridged the social distancing gap. A performance of MLK by the Freshman Chorus, for example, featured a remote learner.

"It was a nice way to show how the remote learners could be featured and participate fully," Antonucci said. Virtual performances will also be a highlight this spring.

Canton Middle School, for example is producing two virtual plays - "Help Desk," and "The Internet is Distract-- Oh Look, a Kitten!" At Canton High School, Prisms, an annual student directed, written and led show that will take place virtually this year on May 15th.

It's a large effort with involvement from students, teachers, volunteers and some of the stage and lighting professionals that have been staples at productions in the past few years.

As usual students are producing the show, writing original music for the various groups to perform and even plan to continue the painting and hanging of murals along the hallway, so they can be video recorded as part of the virtual production.

Another exciting production in the works is an upcoming Musical Review themed "Looking to Brighter Future."

Parent Chuck Simmons, a veteran of CHS play production, long-time



The acclaimed CHS multimedia and multi-format Prisms show will be produced virtually this year.

Left: Actors Reagan Carucci and Declan Emirzian - two seniors that volunteered their talents for Prisms.

accompanist Diana Lawler and Brian Jones, along with a cast of supporting teachers, are working with students on the production.

The idea is to produce a series of scenes, vignettes and small group performances that could be recorded for a virtual performance, or if public health conditions and guidance allows, potentially be presented in front of a small audience in a socially distanced manner.

Antonucci noted how during the pandemic her family turned to the arts for comfort. "We were turning to the art that was seminal for us growing up, and so when we returned to school and people asked, 'Do we play if it's not going to be the same?' My answer was 'you've been in band and chorus since fourth grade with your friends and you've been making music since you were a little one when you were at Cherry Brook. How could we not?' This is part of who we are and this is part of what keeps us afloat in a crisis – is turning to the art that comforts us and I'm just so thankful that the students have heard that message... and they're going for it every day."

Spirit of Giving Back is Stronger Than Ever

Nearly every successful venture during the COVID-19 pandemic has involved flexibility. That certainly applies to charitable efforts

and while some traditional community events were canceled this year, it hasn't stopped teachers and students from finding ways to give back.

Take a recent COVID item drive by The SAVE (Students Against Violence Everywhere) Promise Club, for example. Working from a theme of Showing Compassion, the club, earlier this year, heard that Seasons Hospice and Palliative Care of Connecticut was in need of masks and other safety items related to COVID.

The club started an effort to collect items but this was no mere haphazard effort to throw out a collection box and hope for the best. Club members made signs, verbally promoted the effort, worked with teachers on classroom incentives and even designed a web site. "We hadn't really seen anything like that done yet and it seemed appropriate with the pandemic going on to help with that," said club co-president Maria Pickett.

But the club wasn't expecting the response it received and the collection netted 1,438 masks, 206 packages/bottles of hand sanitizer, 20 thermometers, two packages of gloves and \$131.

There was so much, the club also gave some of the supplies to the Salvation Army's homeless shelter in Hartford, focusing on practical items such as small bottles of hand sanitizer.

"What was really amazing to see was people were so supportive of what we were doing and there were so many teachers that wanted to do anything they could to really make it successful," said Allison Bronson, the club's other co-president. "Everyone feels the hard parts of this year but when people saw an opportunity that we were putting out there to do something good, people were really responsive, which was really amazing. It was really positive and brightened up the year for us. We did put a lot of work into it and it ended up being really successful and the effort didn't go to waste and that was really nice."

But club advisors saw something deeper with the drive and other recent efforts. The SAVE Club, which in recent years is supported by Sandy Hook Promise, is just in its second full year at CHS. Advisors are seeing the students step up and take charge of events.

"Initially we did all the organizing; we felt we had to be in charge," said Canton High School psychologist Brigitte Hoagland, who advises the club with Mike Furey, a guidance counselor. "The students have been designing



Clockwise from above: Members of the Canton High School LEO Club make ribbons for local veterans; Some of the items collected at Canton Intermediate School, where the Student Council coordinated participation in the Jack Bannon Food Drive for Foodshare; Members of the SAVE Promise Club help out at a Foodshare food distribution event.

different activities for the entire school to build awareness, empower people to be change makers," Furey added. Other efforts from the club included helping hand out food with Foodshare and promoting awareness efforts such as "Say Something," which raises awareness about recognizing, taking seriously and reporting threats.

At Canton Intermediate School, advisors to the Student Council have seen a similar trend. The council, for example, helped once again with the Jack Bannon Turkey Trot, a drive named for the late Bannon that involves collecting turkeys and funds for Foodshare.

"This year it was an extra big push for our student council," said Kristy Johnson, who advises the council along with Kelley Herman and Stevie Juliano. "I think this was something that students had run before, but this is the first year students took charge and promoted it to their classrooms."

With a little encouragement and ideas from advisors, the student council is finding ways to impact the local, national and even international community.

The school also raised more than \$2,000 for Connecticut Children's (Medical Center), partially by organizing a fun "penny war."

"We typically tell them about the project and they come up with the ideas of how to actually raise the money or get the cans in, influence their classmates or incentivize the projects," Herman said.

The group has also worked hard to include distance learners.

"We were really conscious, too, how to connect our distance learners to that event – all of our events," Johnson said. "Some efforts such as the virtual zoom meetings are easy enough but distance learners have done even more. For



the Thanksgiving drive, one distance learner put fliers in his neighborhood mailboxes and dropped off bags of food to the school lobby.

Thanking healthcare workers with cards and signs was another major effort at CIS and a Valentine's Day effort was coordinated by many parties including the Student Council, PTO and art department.

In addition to cards, the school's young artists made three large mural style banners for Hartford Hospital, St. Francis Hospital and the Canton Police Department and town of Canton Volunteer Fire and EMS Department.

"It was a way for students to give back to the community through their art," said art teacher Deb Costello, adding that another banner was made to display at a regional Farmington valley Health District vaccination clinic attended by Canton teachers and other school districts.

"That was a good joint effort with the parents and students and they loved seeing their artwork on that scale," Costello said.

Making cards was also one effort conducted by The Canton High School LEO Club (Youth Lions Club), which wrote thank you cards and letters to workers at ShopRite.

"Their thank you cards were really heartfelt and talked about how they really appreciated their help in keeping the community going .. their appreciation of others right now has really come through a lot through their comments and what we've been planning right

now," said math teacher Cecile Mancini, who advises the club with Gabrielle Aitchison, who is math department chair.

The Club has also conducted other unique efforts such as putting together flowerpot kits for senior citizens and creating ribbons for veterans, which were hung on mailboxes throughout town for Veterans Day.

Many of those efforts hinged on the fact that traditional activities that the club participates in, such as Neighbors helping Neighbors, did not happen. Generally, at least 50 students help in that effort, a town wide event that helps those who can no longer perform tasks such as leaf raking.

"I know that a lot of students were disappointed that some of the things we look forward to, those big events, weren't able to happen so they're looking for things they can do to ensure they're making a difference," Aitchison said. "We've come up with some other activities and things are to do."

Similarly, a club Aitchison also advises, Canton Adolescents Taking Action was able to log several efforts such as a pajama fundraiser for CCMC, donations of gift cards through the senior and Social Services Department in Canton at the holidays, cards and signs of cheer for the residents of Cherry Brook Health Care Center, a winter clothing drive through the Canton Food Bank and fundraising for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society in the month of March. At Cherry Brook Primary, a major

See **GIVING BACK** on page 10



Above: Work by first grader Sylvie Hager
 At right: Second grader Mikayla Collins expresses her appreciation

Students in the Canton Public Schools greatly appreciate the front-line workers, teachers, town staff, government officials, coaches, custodians, BOE members and others who have given so selflessly, sometimes at their own risk, during the pandemic. Here are just a few examples of their creativity and appreciation.



A thought from fourth grader Abby Ziemba



Above: Work by 10th Grader Layla Foley
 Left: 11th-grade student Sadie Barker expressed this sentiment.



6th Grader Eason Crowell made sure those behind the scenes are also appreciated.



Above: Sadie DaCruz recreates the atmosphere at Cherry Brook.
 At left: Senior Emma Mates says thank you in a simple, yet profound way.

Sports Teams Learn to Adapt, Make the Best of Season

In a typical year, high school fall sports schedules are ready at the beginning of June. Of course, this school year was anything but normal and shortened seasons, last-minute juggling, masking, social distancing and some sports being sidelined all together became reality. At the same time, however, coaches, students, staff and parents have stepped up and made the best of it.

“It was stressful but another phrase to describe this school year was opportunistic,” said Canton Athletic Director Kim Church. “When we got the information and the opportunity to have some sort of season, the coaches and the staff at our school were amazing. They worked with me on creating safety protocols specific to our school district. The coaches made sure the student athletes were doing what they were supposed to do to be safe and the community really rallied behind and abided by the spectator rules.

There were also some exciting developments. Basketball games, for example, were streamed professionally the network run by that National Federation of High Schools.

Another positive was a Canton Athletic Booster Club sponsored Annual Fall Sports Hunger Challenge in which more than 2,500 items and some cash were collected for the Canton Food Bank. The field hockey team collected the most and were deemed “Canpions” of the event, which was done in a socially distant manner.

And Church said excitement is high for spring.

“Some of the athletes haven’t touched a lacrosse stick or a baseball bat in two years so they’re definitely excited to get back out there,” she said.

If all goes well and stays as expected, the school will continue to allow more spectators than the fall.

“There are going to be a lot more – hopefully – happy faces when we go out to the games, knowing they are allowed to be there with fewer restrictions,” Church said.

She did, however, caution that some restriction will likely stay in place such as the 200 maximum spectator requirements for outdoor events, which might restrict or prevent attendance at some track meets. Additionally, things are also subject to change based on the latest health protocols.

But above all, Church is thankful that things are looking up and with how everyone has worked together.

“I can’t give enough credit to my coaching staff, the administration, my student athletes and all of the families that are involved in athletics and helped out, including the booster club,” she said. “It



really takes a village to make all of these things happen and everybody did their part... I think that really sums it up. It was difficult but we made the most of every situation we were given.”

Fall in Review

Boys Soccer

Record: 9-3

Tournament Results: Came in 3rd place in the NCCC West

All-NCCC: Ty Aleksa, Jackson Miner, Spencer Mix

All-State: Ty Aleksa

All-New England: Ty Aleksa

All-American: Ty Aleksa

Girls Soccer

Record: 5-8

Tournament Results: Came in 5th place in the NCCC West

All-NCCC: Paris Delbone

All-State: None

Field Hockey

Record: 6-8

Tournament Results: Came in 4th place in the CCC B Region

All-NCCC: Sadie Barker, Maggie Gibbons, Taylor Richardson, Poet Watson

All-State: None

Volleyball

Record: 4-10

Tournament Results: Came in 3rd place in the NCCC West

All-NCCC: Mackenzie Archangelo

All-State: None

Boys Cross Country

Record: 6-4

Tournament Results: Finished 3rd in the NCCC West race



All-NCCC: Jack Dendinger, Thomas Purcell

All-State: None

Girls Cross Country

Record: 8-2

Tournament Results: Finished 2nd in the NCCC West race

All-NCCC: Morgan Babbitt, Julia Caputo, Grace First

All-State: None

Football

No season due to COVID restrictions

Individual and Team highlights

Individual and Team highlights...

- Jackson Miner broke the school career goal scoring record for boys soccer with his 65th career goal in the last game of the season!

- Julia Caputo, Nate Lincoln, Jackson Miner signed letters of intent to participate in athletics in college.

Community Service

Volleyball participated in Trick or Trot for the Canton Food Bank and also held a pink game to raise money for Play4theCure

Field Hockey and Girls Soccer held youth clinics throughout September

Winter in Review

Boys Basketball

Record: 11-3

Tournament Results: Made it to the semi-finals of NCCC tournament

All-NCCC: Josh Burke and Silas Sawtelle

Girls Basketball

Record: 9-5



Grynn and Barrett photography



Tournament Results: Made it to the semi-finals of NCCC tournament
All-NCCC: Paige Brown and Sophia Mates

Indoor track

Limited to practices and one exhibition meet

Wrestling

Limited to practices and conditioning

Boys Ice Hockey

Record: 11-1-1

Tournament Results: Won the CCC South Tournament!!!

All-Conference: Braeden Humphrey

Girls Ice Hockey

Record: 9-6

Tournament Results: Won the CCC Tournament!

Bill Phelps Reflects on 38-Plus Years in Education

Bill Phelps knows how to turn lemons into lemonade. Double hip replacement, a tragic loss in youth, unexpected retirement, and of course, COVID – all impacted his life for better or for worse. But he made the best of it.

The long-time Canton resident raised his now-grown sons, Brian and Jonathan, in town with his wife of 36 years, Linda, and was a health and physical education teacher for 38 and 1/2 years. Phelps acknowledged that the coronavirus eventually usurped his dedicated education career in the Canton school system. He retired on Dec. 1, 2020 after having started in Aug. of 1982. “I think I’d still be there if it hadn’t been for the coronavirus. I loved what I did and do. There’s a bit of a hole now,” Phelps admitted, although he still coaches Canton boys’ golf and soccer.

Phelps’s tenure covered all grades, K-12, and he worked at Cherry Brook Elementary, the intermediate, middle and high schools. At Cherry Brook, “We started the health program back in the 90s with a grant that I got from the federal government on Healthy Kids 2000. I’ve had the fortune of doing a lot of different things. There was always something new; it kept me energized and kept me going.”

Using literature as a basis, the health program is still used today and teaches K-3 topics like nutrition, stranger danger, and drug education. According to Phelps, “It’s been a great asset over there.” While the high school always had a health program, the subject was brought into the intermediate and middle schools in the 90s, where the P.E. educators would teach health, too.

“We introduced the DARE program back in the late 80s,” Phelps noted. “Kevin Witkos, who’s a senator now, used to come in. He was the DARE officer. So, we added a bunch of health for the younger ages so that we were building a stronger block from K-12, instead of just 9-12 grades.” In the early 2000s, Canton schools got a grant for a K-12 program called “Here’s Looking at You 2000,” which “allowed a specific health program that allowed teachers to put time in and have a structured curriculum that added 20 hours a year more of health education in the classroom, built on literature,” said Phelps, “And that program was very successful. It was an ongoing systematic program that we built up through the years.” Appealing to the youngest students, the program educated Kindergarten-ers about the dangers of drug-laced

candies, and to never put something in your mouth just because it looks like candy. At the older end of the spectrum, 8th grade and high school students would wear goggles designed to duplicate the feeling of drunkenness, and they had to try different activities, i.e., writing or walking, while wearing them to discover the effects.

In addition to teaching, Phelps coached a variety of sports, including Canton boys wrestling for 30 years. After coaching Simsbury girls lacrosse for 20 years, he left that position for Canton boys golf for 20 years, where he still serves, in addition to currently heading up Canton boys soccer for 35 years.

After providing details of his decades-long career, Phelps shared a few personal reflections about himself.

Favorite Season: I’m not quite sure I have a favorite season; I like all the seasons when they start and then when they end. So, I love it when summer gets here, but in winter, when the snow falls, that’s great for me. And all the seasons have basically been around what I do. So, soccer was fall and wrestling was winter, and I always look forward to the new season coming.

Best Advice: Enjoy life. Don’t spend too much time worrying about the past or future, but just enjoy where you are right now, ‘cuz that’s so important, and it has always been important to me in my life. And my wife gets mad at me for that too, sometimes! It’s like, “You gotta plan for the future.” No, I’m right here, right now; let’s do what we’re doing.

Tops the bucket list: Travel. After my wife retired, we went to England, the Fjords and Norway. We were supposed to go to Italy for traveling after I retired. Probably gonna have to wait on that one because of the cruise lines and everything. So, we’re talking about travel across the United States in a mobile home. I mean, this country and this world – such a fantastic thing. I just haven’t had a chance to see because I’ve been doing all the things here and raising kids and teaching. As soon as I’d get done with Canton schools, I ran the pools up at Renbrook (for the camp). I’ve been up there for 44 years... That was 44 years of never really having a summer vacation. People think teachers get all summers off. I was up there, eight weeks of summer – planning

and cleaning up, but it blew the whole summer so, this is really a time my wife and I just need to spread out and go some other places. I want to see Yosemite and a whole bunch of places. And I can do that now; I got two new hips!

Defining moments in life: The death of my best friend was probably one of the most defining. The marriage of my lovely wife, and my children have certainly been able to be the brightest stars. I stayed in Canton mainly because my kids grew up here. I lived in town; I knew all the kids in town and my kids were brought up in town so that was very important to me to be there to coach. Another one was when I interviewed for my elementary school position. The first position I had was Canton Elementary School, which is now the library, and I was at Cherry Brook School where the gym was turned into a library. So I was actually afraid that, when I retired, that they would turn the new gym into a library. Every gym we have is turned into a library! When I interviewed with Geraldine Smith, the principal, one of the things I said was, “I love little kids and I can handle little kids no problem, but you gotta be able to let me coach at the high school level. I need to be able to work with the high school-level kids. ... The school system has supported me with the coaching, which a lot of school systems don’t do for their teachers. One of the wonderful things about Canton is they knew how important athletics were to the high school kids, and that, I’ve been very thankful for. Two years ago, the summer before, I went to North Dakota because I was a finalist for National Coach of the Year for soccer. That was very exciting. I got State Champions in wrestling and soccer and golf. I’ve been very fortunate with a very illustrious career with the amount of kids – not just kids that won awards and gold medals and state championships – I’ve been enjoying them for different reasons.

Hobbies: My wife and I love gardening. I love working on the house. My other son, Jonathan, is a landscaper and I work with him, not because I work to work, because I love doing things with my hands. I love building



things. I’m trying to get into a little painting now and drawing. I am a fanatic on Abraham Lincoln and I have a huge collection of artifacts and things from 1860s and Abraham Lincoln. And I have a wonderful library of him. I’m getting back to doing more of that now. I have an antique MG that I haven’t got to play with that I will start playing with. And traveling with my wife.

Dream dinner companion: Abraham Lincoln – besides my wife. I’m not getting into trouble for that one! Definitely my wife. But as a third person, it would be Abe. His quotes and things he said and did were just so unbelievable. I’d just love to sit and talk with him. I have a whale’s tooth scrimshaw with his picture and the Gettysburg Address on the back of it, which was done by a local artist here in Avon, Dr. Candels. And it’s the only one that I know of in the world, and it’s so beautiful. Some day that’ll go into the Smithsonian or something, but right now I get to look at it.

Remember me for: I would think loving life. Remember me that I could do something funny and have a good time and not be serious about myself and just enjoy. This year, with the soccer team (of Fall 2020), with the pandemic, we had half the team; we had 10 kids at the time. It was a crazy, crazy thing and I think this team this past year would’ve been a championship team. There was only one team in the state that could’ve handled them. They were such a great team and they didn’t get to do that, but they did such a fantastic job being there every day and working hard. With the circumstances that we had, I missed the last three games because of quarantine and I had to sit in my car and watch their game. It was heartbreaking for me, but the kids were just absolutely wonderful. It was turning lemons into lemonade.

Thinking Outside the Classroom:



The Professional Learning Committee prepares to “fill the cups” of the teachers for the November Remote Professional Learning Day.



Cherry Brook Primary School Teacher Kate Dauphinais gives a remote learning lesson.



In November, Cherry Brook Primary School teachers found creative ways to bring veterans into the classroom.



Canton Intermediate School staff surprise Warren Pelletier Connecticut National InvestWrite Essay competition winner for Grades 6-8, with a “Publisher’s Clearinghouse” type surprise. With Warren, from left, are Principal Rebecca Coiteux, sixth-grade teacher Tracey Reichen and Enrichment Specialist Stevie Juliano.

Giving Back from page 6
focus has been creating and maintaining joy, Principal Andy Robbin said. Students returned this past fall with a variety of experiences and feelings and the idea was to take and expand traditions in a safe way. That has been done through Spirit Days, such as a Time Travel Day and Fit Day. Many of the themes double as fundraisers, such as PJ to benefit CCMC. Spirit week themes have included color week and Read Across America week. Virtual school meetings allow each classroom to tune in and share their writing, songs, dances poetry reading and more. The school has also held card-making celebrations to benefit the Canton Food Bank and thank Veterans and Health Care workers. At Canton Middle School efforts this year have included a food drive in which students and staff collected approximately 1,000 items for the Canton Food Bank.



Canton Middle School has also worked hard to hold fun activities, such as the Fall Festival and the upcoming Field Day. Additionally, the school had a safe sports seasons and has been able to run most its clubs. “These are groups and activities that bring people together, and we’ve been able to keep them accessible to both in-person and remote learners throughout the year,” said principal Jeffrey Moore.

In fact, the school has created a new Science Club, which focuses on appreciation of nature and hands-on activities in a safe environment. The school is also producing two virtual plays, “Help Desk,” and “The Internet is Distract--Oh Look, a Kitten!” “CMS strives to be a community in which each student feels seen and valued, and in a year that forced us to be separated to stay safe, we’ve found ways to keep the social and emotional bonds strong,” Moore said. “And finally, we have not let the details of this year distract us from our larger mission of continuing to become a more inclusive school. We’ve embraced difficult conversations about race, gender and equity, and have taken steps to be a community in which we work on solving these systemic issues together. Our students are leaders in this work, and have been exemplary role models of patience, flexibility and determination this year.” At Canton High School, another inter-

nal effort also didn’t go unnoticed. It might not be one that made headlines but Bronson felt it was notable when teachers got together before winter break to give members of the senior class gifts, such as gift cards and small stuffed animals. She remembers asking a teacher why and hearing, “It’s been a really hard year for you and we wanted to show we care.” “That was one of the biggest times I’ve seen that compassion, that community,” she said. “That was really nice.” Pickett feels that the compassion so many have shown during this time, the acts large, small, noticed and unseen, will continue. “I think people have gotten more compassionate and more appreciative of what they have,” she said. “Just as we appreciate what we have more and what we can give to others. It was a reality check for everybody. I think in the future with more drives there probably will be more participation just as we appreciate what we have even more.”

Teachers Find Creative Spaces for Learning



At Cherry Brook Primary School, teachers often hold Reader's and Writer's workshop activities outside.

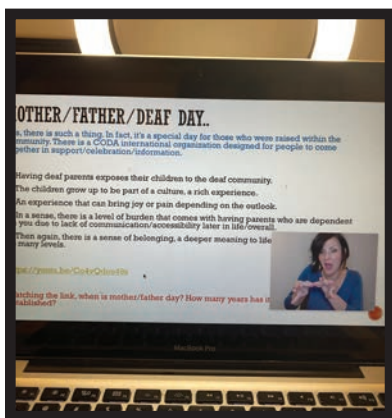


Students in Rebecca Truscio's 5th grade class wrote their own stuffed animal wedding story line, and then brought it to life with a "ceremony" at the school.



Above: A Game day at Canton Middle School was one of several ways staff worked to bring kids together.
Below: Members of the high school band practice at direction of Rachel Antonucci.

Independent learning at Canton Intermediate School often takes place outside, where students can space out and enjoy the fresh air.



Rachel Posner's American Sign Language 1 class is completely online. She records the lessons "live" and designs them to be used as a study guide/tutorial as needed with cultural components, sign language and follow up assignments.
Right: Members of Keith Gregorian-Michaelsen's AP Physics class apply the skills they've learned to building bird nests.



New Certified Staff for 2020-21

Jessica Bergstrom



Cherry Brook Primary School – Grade 2 Teacher
Education: Masters – Saint Joseph College – Early Childhood Education & Special Education; Bachelors – Western Connecticut State University – Anthropology & Sociology

Previously Employed: Frank T. Wheeler School in Plainville, CT – Kindergarten Teacher; Garden Hills Elementary School – Atlanta, GA – PreSchool Teacher; The Goddard School in Danbury

Betina Boutilier



Canton Intermediate School Distance Learning Teacher – Grade 5
Education: Masters – Central Connecticut State University – STEM Curriculum Bachelors – Saint Joseph College – Child Studies

Previously Employed: Kelly Services – Education Consultant; Region 6 – Grade 3 Teacher; Region 7 – Grade 6 teacher – Grade 2 Teacher

Meghan Boutote



Cherry Brook Primary School – Grade 2 Teacher
Education: Masters – Quinnipiac University – Elementary Education; Bachelors – Colby-Sawyer College – Child Development

Previously Employed: Springfield Public Schools – Teacher; Bright Horizons at Village Place – Preschool Co-Op Teacher, Summer Camp Co-Teacher

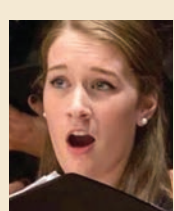
Elizabeth Brodbar



Cherry Brook Primary School – Special Education Teacher
Education: Masters of Professional Studies from Manhattanville College, NY; Bachelors of Business – University College Cork

Previously Employed: Pine Grove Elementary School Avon, Special Education Teacher K-1; Baychester Academy, Bronx, NY, 4th Grade Special Education Teacher; Roaring Brook Elementary, Avon, Student Support Specialist; Urbin T. Kelley Elementary, Southington, Special Education Teacher K-2

Samantha Card



Cherry Brook Primary School – Music Teacher
Education: Masters of Arts – Music Education – UCONN; Bachelors – Music Education – UCONN

Previously Employed: von der Mehden Recital Hall – Stage manager – Storrs; Emanuel Lutheran Church – Soprano Section Leader – Manchester; Hampton Congregational Church – Soprano – Hampton

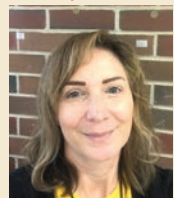
Alison Coddington



Elementary – School Social Worker
Education: Sixth Year Degree – Masters of Social Work from Simmons College, Boston, MA; Bachelors – Social Work – Sacred Heart University,

Fairfield
Previously Employed: Franklin Public Schools as Therapeutic Program Adjustment Counselor; Carroll School (private special education school), Waltham, MA – School Social Worker; Gifford School (therapeutic school, Weston, MA – Social Worker

Kelly Davis



Grade 2 Teacher – Cherry Brook Primary School
Education: Masters – Saint Joseph's College – Special Education; Bachelors – McDaniel College, MD – Elementary Education

Previously Employed: The Master's School – First Grade Teacher; Premier Events – Curriculum Coordinator and Facilitator – Westminster, MD; Indian Springs Elementary School – First & Third Grade Teacher – Mobile, AL

Kelly DiMartino



Special Education Teacher – Cherry Brook Primary School
Education: Masters – Special Education – Central Connecticut State University; Bachelors – Elementary Education – Mount Saint Mary's University, MD

Previously Employed: The Webb School in the Valley, Institute of Living – Avon; St. Thomas the Apostle School as Elementary Teacher – West Hartford

Melanie Drinkwater



Science Teacher – Canton Middle School
Education: Masters – Teaching Science – State University of New York, Stony Brook; Bachelors – Biology – Goshen College, IN

Previously Employed: Teaching Assistant for Cell Biology, Microbiology, Microbial Biology, and Anatomy at Goshen College – Goshen, IN

Taylor Gouveia



Canton Intermediate School Distance Learning – Grade 4
Education: Masters – University of Connecticut – Elementary Education Bachelors – University of Connecticut – Elementary Education

Previously Employed: Farmington Valley Dance and Music, LLC; Little Blessings Preschool as Camp Assistant

Samantha Grobard



Special Education Teacher – Canton Intermediate School
Education: Masters – Special Education – Saint Joseph College – West Hartford Bachelors – Special Education and Liberal Arts – Massachusetts State University

– Westfield State University
Previously Employed: Simsbury Public Schools – Paraeducator – Simsbury; Wheeler Clinic – Special Education Assistant – Plainville

Zoë Kramer



Special Education Teacher – Canton Middle School
Education: Masters – Special Education – Saint Joseph College; Bachelors – Sociology & Psychology – Keene State College - NH

Previously Employed: Canton Public Schools as Special Education Paraeducator – 2013-2019

Michelle St. Laurent



Grade 3 – Cherry Brook Primary School
Education: Masters – Early Childhood Education – Saint Joseph College – West Hartford; Bachelors – Elementary Education – Massachusetts State University

Previously Employed: Cherry Brook Primary School Long Term Sub; Cherry Brook Primary School – Permanent Building Sub; Cherry Brook Primary School – SRBI Paraeducator

Megan Mason



Grade 4 – Canton Intermediate School
Education: Masters – Reading and Language Arts, Central Connecticut State University; Bachelors – Elementary and Special Education – Salve Regina

University
Previously Employed: VIP Kid as an ESL Teacher in San Francisco, CA; Farmington Public Schools – Elementary Classroom Teacher

Jennifer McDermott



Grade 3 – Cherry Brook Primary School
Bachelors – Central Connecticut State College
Previous Experience SRBI Paraprofessional – Cherry Brook Primary School
Long Term Sub – Grade 2 – Cherry Brook Primary

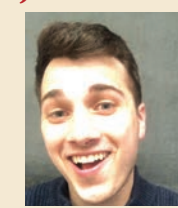
Kimberly O'Brien



Cherry Brook Primary Distance Learning Teacher – Grade 1
Education: Masters – Saint Joseph College – Education; Bachelors – Lynchburg College – Early Childhood Education

Previously Employed: Simsbury Public Schools – Kindergarten Paraprofessional; The Master's School – Classroom Teacher – Early Kindergarten & Preschool; Canton Public Schools – Literacy Tutor

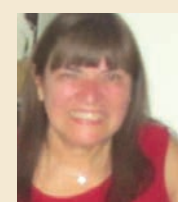
James Schirber



Math Teacher – Canton High School
Education: Masters – Secondary Education in Mathematics – University of Rhode Island; Bachelors – Math/Statistics – University of Connecticut

Previously Employed: Mt. Hope High School Student Teacher in Math – Bristol, RI; Camp Wannagoagain, Camp Counselor – Johnston, RI

Maria Sokola



Spanish Teacher – Canton High School
Education: Masters – Central Connecticut State University – 2 MASTERS – Modern Languages & Spanish Bachelors – Charter Oak

College - Spanish
Previous Experience: Killingly Public Schools – Spanish Teacher; Goodwin College – Adjunct Spanish Professor; Lyman Memorial High School – Spanish Teacher; Hebrew High of New England – Spanish Teacher; Torrington Middle School – Spanish Teacher; CREC – Spanish Teacher; Griswold Middle School – Jewett City, CT - Spanish Teacher

Joseph Sobowicz



Physical Education Teacher – Cherry Brook Primary School and Canton Middle School
Education: Bachelors – Springfield College – Physical Education

Previously Employed: Wolcott Public Schools – Physical Education Teacher; Granby Public Schools – Physical Education Teacher
West Hartford Public Schools – Physical Education Teacher; Newington Public Schools – Physical Education Teacher

Megan Wood



Grade 6 – Canton Intermediate School
Masters – University of St. Joseph
Bachelors – The Culinary Institute of America

Previously Employed: Canton Intermediate School – Started in March 2019 – Grade 6 Torrington Public Schools – Long Term Sub – Grade 4 STEM
Canton Public Schools Building Substitute

Jennifer Zenuh



Family & Consumer Science – Canton High School
Education: Masters – University of Hartford; Bachelors – Eastern Connecticut State University

Previously Employed: Substitute Teacher – Canton Public Schools – December 2008 – September 2014; Bristol Public Schools – Language Arts Teacher; East Windsor Public Schools – Tutor and substitute