

# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

A Publication of the Cheektowaga Central School District

Fall Issue 2023



**JOIN OUR TEAM**

**Cheektowaga Central School District is hiring.**



Visit  
**[cheektowagak12.org/Employment](https://cheektowagak12.org/Employment)** for a list of open positions.

## A Message from the Superintendent

Welcome to Fall! It is hard to believe almost three months of the school year have already concluded. I hope that this newsletter finds you being able to enjoy the beautiful fall weather as the seasons change.

Speaking of change, with every school district every school year comes with a certain amount of change as well. This year is truly my first full year as Superintendent so this summer I had the opportunity to lead our administrative team to reset ourselves, starting with our vision and mission. I look forward to moving forward as a district with these initiatives to create a climate and culture of success for our students and families.

Continuing with the theme of change, the Cheektowaga Central School District will soon be retiring our Warrior mascot as resolved by the Board of Regents of the New York State Education Department. Our student mascot submission ran from September 9-October 13. We recently compiled all of the student submissions and completed the first round of student voting. Additional rounds of student voting will take place between now and December. Our hope is to announce the new mascot of the Cheektowaga Central School District to our community in January 2024.

Scott Zipp  
Superintendent of Schools



*Mr. Scott Zipp  
Superintendent  
of Schools*

## Welcome Leza Braun

The Cheektowaga Central School District would like to give a warm welcome to our new Central Office Payroll Clerk, Leza Braun.

## District Mission, Vision and Priorities

**District Vision:** Where Character, Curriculum, and Community Connect

**District Mission:** Create a structured and engaging environment that fosters positive relationships and the well-being of ALL in reaching their full potential.

**District Priorities:** Well-Being, Structure, Engagement, Relationships

## Community Involvement Award & Wall of Fame Nominations

We are currently accepting nominations for our Community Involvement Award and our Wall of Fame. To nominate an individual, please complete the nomination form found on our website at: [cheektowagak12.org/domain/485](https://cheektowagak12.org/domain/485).



### Community Involvement Award Categories

#### Category 1: Outstanding Individual(s)

Presented to an individual who significantly serves the district as a volunteer, a committee member, or a contributor to sports/athletic or arts programs, or an individual who over the years has made a significant contribution to CCSD.

#### Category 2: Business/Agency/Organization

Presented to a business, agency or organization that has made a significant contribution to the students of CCSD.

### Wall of Fame

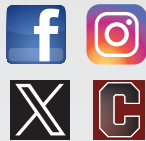
This distinguished award honors the outstanding achievement and contributions of a Cheektowaga graduate (of at least 10 years) who has achieved great distinction in academia, public service, business, athletics, visual/performing arts, etc.

# Welcome New Staff

Union East is very excited to welcome the following staff to our school community:

Ms. Bailey Dolegowski, Physical Education  
Ms. Jillian English, ESOL  
Ms. Samantha Garcia, ESOL  
Ms. Rachel Kedzierski, Special Education  
Mrs. Lynn Kluge, Grade 3  
Ms. Emily Marino, Grade 3  
Ms. Natalie Minotti, Grade 4  
Ms. Amanda Nguyen, Kindergarten  
Mr. Jonah Seiler, Physical Education  
Mrs. Krystal Aydelotte-Pecora, Cafeteria Monitor  
Ms. Tashiana Daniels, Teacher Aide  
Ms. Samantha Moonan, Teacher Aide  
Mrs. Del Moore, Cafeteria Monitor  
Ms. Marla Mugler, Teacher Aide  
Mrs. Kelly Omari, Cafeteria Monitor  
Ms. Erica Pirro, Teacher Aide  
Ms. Tangina Rimi, Cafeteria Monitor  
Mrs. Chrisha Riexinger, Teacher Aide

## Website, News and Information



Go to [www.cheektowagak12.org](http://www.cheektowagak12.org) for the following: Community Use of Facilities; Tobacco Use; Student Drug/Alcohol Use; Sexual Harassment; Graduation Requirements; District Newsletters; Internet Use; AIDS/HIV Education; Safety; Special Education; Board of Education; Transportation; Parent Involvement; Emergency Closings; Free/Reduced Meal Information & Application; VADIR & DASA forms; supply lists; registration information; staff directories; and more.

### Follow us on social media:

Facebook: @CheektowagaCentral.CCSD  
Instagram: @CheektowagaCSD  
X (formerly Twitter): @CheektowagaCSD

### Follow our Buildings on social media:

#### Union East Elementary School

Facebook: @UnionEastElementary

#### Middle School

Facebook: @CheektowagaMiddleSchool  
X (formerly Twitter): @CheektowagaMS

#### High School

Facebook: @CheektowagaHighSchool

## Union East Elementary School

### Students Enjoy Niagara Falls

Our fourth grade class enjoyed a field trip to Niagara Falls in September. Through the generosity of the Connecting Kids to Parks Field Trip grant, our students had the opportunity to visit the Cave of the Winds and Maid of the Mist. This team building field trip is a great way to kick off their fourth grade year!



### Students Travel to Highmark Stadium

A group of students from Union East had the opportunity to participate in the Play 60 Challenge Kick-Off Event at Highmark Stadium on October 3. The students participated in a number of football activities guided by members of the Buffalo Bills football team. Our entire school is participating in the Play 60 Challenge this year which encourages 60 minutes of physical activity each day.





# Cheektowaga Middle School

## Math Classes Add Enthusiasm

Students in grades 5-8 are working very hard in their math classes. Fifth graders are learning about volume. They have been building figures and prisms with cubes and finding the volumes. They have also been comparing different units of measurements, such as a cubic inch, a cubic foot, and a cubic yard. Students have engaged in many hands-on activities to understand what volume is and different ways to determine it. In sixth grade, the students are exploring adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing whole numbers and decimals. The sixth graders have also been practicing math in Lab using a program called IXL. A letter will be sent home explaining how IXL can also be accessed at home. Seventh grade is finishing probability and starting scale factor and proportionality. Grade 7 Honors is starting their study of the laws of exponents and Pythagorean theorem. Eighth grade students are studying transformations, dilations and similarity. Math 8 Honors is studying statistics and then will begin linear equations, inequalities, and systems studies which will last through the Fall.



The New York State Math Assessment will take place this Spring. Students in grades 6-8 can use a scientific calculator for this assessment, as well as in their classes. We highly encourage our students to have their own calculator. If you do not have your own calculator and would like to get one, our math teachers recommend the Texas Instruments TI-30XIIS Scientific Calculator. The calculator can be found at multiple retailers, including Walmart and Amazon.

## ELA Fun in Full Swing

The Book Fair was a huge success. Thank you to all of the parents and students that supported our event. New classroom initiatives are in full swing. We have added spelling, grammar and the Word of the Day to our daily teaching.

In fifth grade, classes have been reading fiction and working on identifying story elements with a focus on character traits and summarizing the plot. Students have been writing paragraphs to respond to their reading. Our sixth graders are writing personal narratives with a focus on an organized beginning, middle and end. Students have also been using dialogue and correct sentence structure. In seventh grade classes, students are working on a "Community" unit, and are learning about nonfiction text structure. Eighth grade students are starting to read the novel "The Outsiders," and will be learning about life and culture of the 1960s through articles and reading passages.



## CCMS Welcomes New Staff

The Cheektowaga Central Middle School would like to give a warm welcome to the following new teachers and paraprofessionals that were hired at the start of the school year:

Riley Chavanne, Physical Education Teacher

Aliyah Dandy, Teacher Aide

Joseph Torillo, Math Teacher

Allison Clark, Teacher Aide

Carrier Garrison, Math Teacher

Samantha Scheffler, English Teacher

Chelsea McKeever, Special Education Teacher

Shannon Borowiak, ESL Teacher

Brittany Ferraraccio, Speech Therapist

Heather Brady, Special Education Teacher

Alexandra Robertson, Teacher Aide

Megan Walker, Teacher Aide

Michael Stark, Teacher Aide

Angela Scholl, Monitor

## Learning Takes Off in World Language Classes

**7th Grade Spanish** - Spanish classes have had a great start to their first year learning a new language. We are well into our first unit, learning Greetings & Introductions, and we will begin learning about Día de los Muertos during the month of October.

**8th Grade Spanish** - Spanish classes have been learning about Hispanic Heritage Month and notable Hispanic Americans. We are working on reviewing our vocabulary from last year, while learning some new writing and study techniques. We are even learning cursive writing!

**7th & 8th Grade French** - French classes are hard at work starting a brand new school year. Students are working on wrapping up their first unit of study. In the fall, students will begin talking about La Toussaint.

# Studying Culture, History in Social Studies

Students are exploring culture and history locally and around the world as part of their social studies classes.

Fifth graders started their learning this year by focusing on map skills. This knowledge of the world will help them as they move forward and focus on the early civilizations of the Western Hemisphere and the impact of Europeans on North and South America.

In sixth grade social studies, we are finishing up our first unit on map and globe skills, the five fields of social studies and world geography. After this, we will begin exploring early humans. We'll learn about how they survived as hunters and gatherers. Students will then learn about the first Farmers of the Neolithic Revolution which saw the development of farming, and how this new knowledge led to increased food supplies. More food led to more people living together, creating new towns and cities. These towns and cities will join together to form the earliest civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China.

Seventh graders started their studies for this year by learning about Native American culture and tribes within New York state, including the Iroquois. Students will then move on to the Age of Exploration and the creation of the 13 Colonies. They will then take part in a unit on how the 13 Colonies thrived in America.

In eighth grade, we began the year learning about the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Next, the eighth graders will begin learning about Reconstruction. Students will learn about the struggles our nation faced as we put our nation back together after the Civil War. After that, students will study The Westward Movement; learning how our nation connects the East to the West with the building of the Transcontinental Railroad.

## Cheektowaga Middle School

# Students Enjoy Science Lessons

Students are tackling some fun challenges in their learning as the new year gets underway.

Fifth grade students are playing the role of a water resource engineer to solve a water shortage problem. Through scientific investigations and informational texts and diagrams, they are learning about the states of water in the water cycle and how that relates to real world situations. Students are also using computer based simulations to gain a deeper understanding of Earth's systems.



Sixth grade students are currently working on harnessing human energy. Students are assuming the role of rescue workers trying to solve the problem on how to capture human energy that can be used to power electrical devices. During this discovery, students will learn the ways energy is transferred and converted.

Students will apply this knowledge about energy to design an energy system that can use human kinetic energy to power an electrical device.

In seventh grade, students are studying geology on Mars and plate tectonics. Students will be developing ideas and gathering evidence to support a claim based on different geologic processes. Amplify science provides interactive simulations and students will have a chance to manipulate these simulations. Collected data will be used as evidence to support the claim.

This fall eighth graders are studying the human microbiome and matter and energy. Students will be developing ideas and gathering evidence to support a claim that 1 trillion microorganisms on and in our body keep us healthy. We will study bacteria, infections and treatments including fecal transplants. In matter and energy, we will discover what caused the failure of the Biodome. Amplify science provides interactive simulations and students will have a chance to manipulate these simulations. Collected data will be used as evidence to support the claim.

Students in the Regents Living Environment course have spent the month of September studying safety, measurement, graphs, as well as the steps involved in the scientific method. They are designing and carrying out investigations in class and presenting their findings to their peers. In October, students turned their attention to biochemistry.



*Students working for a better world.*



## Cheektowaga High School

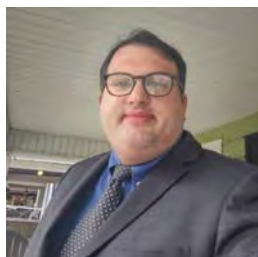
# Cheektowaga Central High School Welcomes 10 New Teachers

Ms. Aiken has joined our Social Studies Department. She is a graduate of Niagara University and is currently pursuing her master's degree from the University of Albany in Curriculum & Instruction Technology. Within her classroom, Ms. Aiken strives to grow her students' appreciation for history by instilling the idea that it is impossible to understand the present without understanding the past. Outside of the classroom, you can find her coaching soccer and softball.



Miss Brunner has joined our Math Department. She is a graduate of the University at Buffalo with a background in engineering and math. Miss Brunner was fortunate enough to learn and grow at Central during her student teaching, creating relationships with the students here that she can continue to grow. She loves riddles, so if you have a good one, find her and share it!

Mr. Chasse has joined our Special Education Department. He is a graduate of Medaille College and St. Bonaventure University. Although he has taught many courses, his expert subject is Global Studies. His classes emphasize a hands-on approach to history, while also looking at the unique quirks and profiles of historical figures to make learning more enjoyable. He loves puns and is not afraid to drop one if the moment is right.



Mr. Cross has joined our English Department. He is a graduate of McKinley High School and Buffalo State College. Mr. Cross is a huge believer in the intersection of community and education. In his classroom, discussions center around real world issues and topics that allow students to explore ideas through research & investigating texts. He believes in the progression and success of his students and strives to ensure that each voice is heard.

Mr. Fries has joined our Social Studies Department. He is a graduate of the University at Buffalo, having earned both his bachelors and master's degrees there. Mr. Fries is excited to return to Cheektowaga Central High School after completing his student teaching experience here in the Spring. He loves sports, especially baseball and golf, and looks forward to getting involved in the school community any way he can!

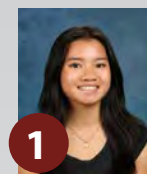


*continued on next page.*

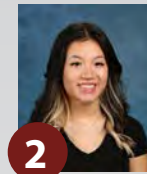


## Class of 2023 Top 10

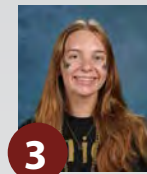
1. **Tiffany Nguyen**  
Georgetown University  
Major: Global Health



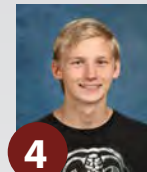
2. **Nghi Le**  
University at Buffalo  
Major: Bio Chemistry



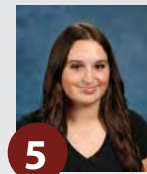
3. **Mehgan Burke**  
Niagara University  
Major: Psychology



4. **Jack Schihl**  
Mercyhurst University  
Major: Intelligence Studies



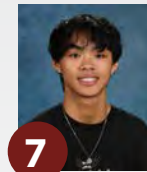
5. **Adriana DuVal**  
Alfred State  
Major: Sonography



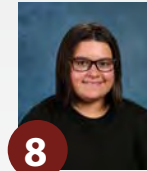
6. **Jocelyn Tracy**  
Canisius College  
Major: Sports and Exercise Health Care



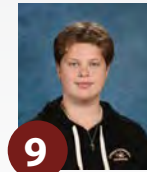
7. **Adam Tran**  
University at Buffalo  
Major: Exercise Science



8. **Marissa Sealander**  
St. Bonaventure University  
Major: Psychology



9. **Cassandra Moyer**  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
Major: Mechanical Engineering

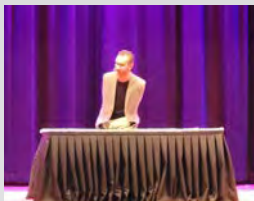


10. **Puran Rai**  
Erie Community College  
Major: Information Technology



# Speaker Teaches Resilience

High school students had the chance to hear about resilience and reframing challenges from Nick Vujicic, who was born without limbs. The Australian-American speaker has traveled to 78 countries and presented on 3,500 stages, to crowds as large as 800,000 people. He works with education ministries of various nations and live streams his anti-bullying messaging to youth. Vujicic has also developed the Attitude Is Altitude Curriculum, helping to enforce values and positive attitudes for Gen Z. He is an international bestselling author, an entrepreneur & investor, a producer and actor, who has met more than 25 presidents and prime ministers. His September 29 presentation opened the hearts and minds of our students.



Cheektowaga Central High School Principal Mrs. Cyganovich and guest speaker Nick Vujicic.

If you are doubting how far you can go,  
just *remember*  
how far you have come.

## Cheektowaga High School

### Cheektowaga Central High School Welcomes 10 New Teachers

continued from page 5

Mr. Harper has joined our Social Studies Department. He is excited to return to the place where he completed his student teaching. He was raised in Kenmore after being adopted from South Korea, and enjoys playing video games, studying history and reading scary stories.



Ms. Lehner is an alumna of Cheektowaga Central High School. She received her bachelor's degree in Human Resources from Empire State College and recently completed her master's degree in School Librarianship at the University at Buffalo. As the librarian, Ms. Lehner hopes to share her love of reading and all things information, and is also looking forward to connecting students with books that speak to them.



Mrs. Mills has joined our Special Education Department. Mrs. Mills is a graduate of Canisius University, having earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees there. She comes to us with 13 years of teaching experience in both general education and special education. Mrs. Mills' teaching philosophy is that every student is capable of being successful with encouragement and the right amount of help and effort.



Mr. Mittlefehldt has joined our ELL Department. He is a graduate from the University at Buffalo and Universidad de la Habana. He comes to Cheektowaga with his eyes on helping our English Language Learning population strive to be their best.



He brings his enthusiasm for individual and cultural expression and aims to help celebrate diversity, equity, and inclusion with his students.

Ms. Nagel has joined our Science Department. She earned her bachelor's degree in Biology from SUNY Geneseo and her master's in Science Education from Buffalo State University.



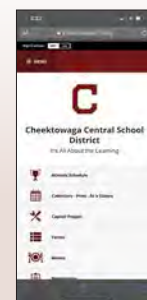
Her love and passion for the natural world has led her to teaching, where she has gained experience in nature centers, museums and schools around Western New York. She most recently worked at the Buffalo Zoo, coordinating various education programs both in and out of schools.

## District App

The Cheektowaga Central School District is providing parents, teachers, students and community members with an easy way to stay connected with the schools - a free mobile app!

To download the app:

- Open App Store (iPhone) or Play Store (Android)
- Search for "Cheektowaga Central SD"
- Customize the app by selecting the schools you are most interested in following for news and updates





# HOMECOMING WEEK



Staff members dressed up as a cow and cowboy for Western Day.



Fifth grade students dressed the part for Western Day.



Three seventh grade Mr. Bengerts reported to Art Class on Dress Like a Teacher Day.



Students participating in the Pep Rally limbo competition.



Middle School students showed off their fun taco themed hats on Hat Day.



Junior and senior students participating in the annual Power Puff game.



Students participating in a friendly game of Tug-a-War.



Cheektowaga Central High School cheerleaders performing during the Pep Rally.



The Cheektowaga Central School District kicked off Homecoming Week with a Color Run.

## Community Corner

The Western New York



**Need Help Making Ends Meet  
at the Holidays?**

# The WNY Holiday Partnership is here!

Families who meet the income guidelines can receive toys and gifts for their children 12 and younger.

### Application Intake

Union East Elementary School  
Thursday, November 16, 4:30-7 p.m.  
Friday, November 17, 8:30 a.m. - noon

### Resurrection Life Food Pantry

2145 Old Union Road, Cheektowaga, NY 14227

**October 26-December 7**  
(Closed November 23)

**Tuesdays: 10 a.m. - noon**

**Thursdays: 10 a.m. - noon, 6-7 p.m.**

Please call 211 for additional information,  
documentation requirements and alternative locations.

Community donations to Toys for Tots Buffalo  
support the WNY Holiday Partnership.

The WNY Holiday Partnership is a collaboration of nonprofits,  
The Buffalo News, Wegmans and the USMC Toys for Tots.



## Cheektowaga Youth Engaged in Service (Y.E.S.) Program

Middle and high school students are invited to help make a difference in the Cheektowaga community! The Cheektowaga Y.E.S. Program offers a variety of activities for teens to assist with:

- Leading themed children's craft night events
- Cooking meals for families staying at the Grace Guest House while loved ones are in the hospital
- Packing groceries at the St. Stephen's Food Pantry
- Inspiring future engineers at Lego Club
- And so much more

Y.E.S. also offers bi-monthly workshops such as resume writing and interview skills 101, and healthy cooking classes for teens to learn new skills and better themselves; as well as social events to build camaraderie and nurture friendships. Before getting started, volunteers need to attend a mandatory orientation session. For more information or to sign up, call (716) 897-7207 ext. 6655 or visit [www.CheektowagaYES.org](http://www.CheektowagaYES.org). Orientation sessions will be held from 6-7 p.m. at the Alexander Community Center, 275 Alexander Ave., Cheektowaga, NY 14211 on November 20.

## Now Hiring in Cheektowaga

- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| • Olive Garden                          | • Marshalls   |
| • JCPenney, Walden Galleria Mall        | • Burger King |
| • Famous Footwear, Walden Galleria Mall | • McDonalds   |
| • Michaels                              | • Wendy's     |
| • Gabe's                                | • Walmart     |
| • Chipotle                              |               |

You must be 16 years or older to apply. If you are interested in working at any of the above locations, please contact them directly to complete the application.

## Cheektowaga Community Hub

The Cheektowaga Community Hub offers supportive services that include, but are not limited to, employment and training opportunities, utility assistance, legal aid, healthcare, housing assistance (eviction/foreclosure), and counseling (mental wellness/ substance recovery).

For more information email [CheektowagaHub@gmail.com](mailto:CheektowagaHub@gmail.com) or call (716) 710-9098. The Cheektowaga Community Hub operates the first and third Tuesday from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. at 2145 Old Union, Cheektowaga, NY 14225.

Scan to view a variety of resources available to the Cheektowaga Community.

Scan to view a  
variety of resources available to the  
Cheektowaga Community.

