

# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

A Publication of the Cheektowaga Central School District

Fall Issue 2022



## Homecoming Week



Homecoming week took place Sept. 17-24. The high school kicked off the week with banner painting and a coloring contest. Each day was a different dress-up theme in which both students and staff participated.

The powderpuff game drew a large crowd and was an intense game. The first ever overtime had to be held, with the senior girls barely edging out for the win. Friday's pep rally had students competing in musical chairs, a limbo contest, and tug of war. Once again, the seniors were victorious, even beating the teachers in a game of tug of war.

The party in the parking lot was enjoyed by all ages, with both the girls' swim team and the girls' junior varsity volleyball team winning the best parking spot decorating contest. Many Cheektowaga teams won their games throughout the week, including girls' and boys' volleyball, girls' soccer, and both varsity and junior varsity football. The week ended with a sold-out Homecoming dance.

*more photos on page 3*

## Fifth Grade Students Attend Flag Football Event

Last month, Cheektowaga Central Middle School fifth graders were given a unique opportunity to participate in the 2022 M&T Bank Football program at Highmark Stadium. As part of the program, students were invited to Highmark Stadium where they had the chance to participate in activity stations led by seven Buffalo Bills players. Station activities were followed by a friendly on-field game.



The M&T Bank Flag Football program is a joint initiative created to provide students with a unique opportunity to learn the fundamentals of the game and the importance of active, healthy lifestyles.

## Looking ahead...

## WNY Holiday Toys for Tots

Application Intake at Union East Elementary School will take place on Thurs., Nov 17 from 12-6 p.m.

Families will need to bring the following documentation: picture ID, proof of residence, proof of total income for past 30 days, ID for all children for whom application is made, and social security numbers for all members of the household.

Application intake at the Resurrection Life Food Pantry, 2145 Old Union, Cheektowaga, NY 14225 from Nov. 1-Dec. 8, 2022 on Tuesdays 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and Thursdays 10 a.m.-12 p.m., 6-7 p.m.

Families who meet the income guidelines can receive toys and gifts for their children 12 and younger. For documentation requirements or any questions, please call 211 or (716) 608-3400.

## Parent Portal

Are you a middle school or high school parent/guardian who is looking for daily updates on your student's academic progress? Be sure to check your Parent Portal. If you need assistance, please reach out to Laurie Ferry, Community Engagement Specialist/K-12 Student Services Leader, by email at [lferry@ccsd-k12.net](mailto:lferry@ccsd-k12.net) or phone at (716) 686-3618.



# Attendance Phone Directory

All Buildings: (716) 686-3600

To call in a student absence, follow prompts from the Auto Attendant: choose the correct school and press #1 for Attendance.

Parents are reminded that if their child will be absent, they should call the school between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. on the day of the absence. The student is always required to bring a written note from a parent on the student's first day back giving the reason for the absence.

It is also necessary for a student to bring a note from the parent when an early dismissal is. All notes must include a phone number where the parent can be immediately reached.

# 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.

### Follow us on social media:

Facebook: @CheektowagaCentral.CCSD  
Instagram: @CheektowagaCSD  
Twitter: @CheektowagaCSD

### Follow our Buildings on social media:

**Union East Elementary School**  
Facebook: @UnionEastElementary

**Middle School**  
Facebook: @CheektowagaMiddleSchool  
Twitter: @CheektowagaMS

**High School**  
Facebook: @CheektowagaHighSchool

## District News

### A Message from the Director of Pupil Services

As the colder weather approaches and the sniffles begin, please strive to keep yourself and your community healthy. As much as we want your student in class, if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, please keep them home to rest up: fever, vomiting (within the last 24 hours), diarrhea (within the last 24 hours), chills, a cold with a runny nose and cough, sore throat, and Strep Throat. Your student may return to school if they have been fever-free without the use of Tylenol/Motrin for 24 hours, and/or have not had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours.



Mrs. Erin Weir,  
Director of Pupil Services

### A Message from the Community Engagement Specialist

The Cheektowaga Central School District believes in the importance of the partnership between our school, our families, and the community. As the Community Engagement Specialist, it is my professional responsibility, but also my personal interest, to support our families in any way possible. If you have any questions or need assistance, I can be reached by phone at (716) 686-3618 or email [lferry@ccsd-k12.net](mailto:lferry@ccsd-k12.net).



Mrs. Laurie Ferry, Community  
Engagement Specialist

## Board of Education

The Board of Education meets on Tuesdays, as listed below, in the Raymond L. Carr Board Room/LGI Room located in the Cheektowaga Central High School. Meetings begin at 6 p.m. The Board of Education transacts business only at scheduled meetings. Special meetings may be called at the request of a Board member. District residents are encouraged to participate in all public board meetings. Agendas are provided to visitors. Opportunity is provided during the course of the meeting for district residents wishing to address the Board. If you wish to have an item placed on the agenda, please submit your request, in writing, to the Board President or to the Superintendent by 4 p.m. of the Tuesday preceding the meeting.

### The 2022-23 Board Meeting Schedule is as Follows:

September 13, 2022	March 7, 2023 (Preliminary Budget Presentation)
October 11, 2022	April 18, 2023 (Adopt CCSD Budget/Vote on BOCES Budget)
November 8, 2022	May 2, 2023 (Budget Hearing)
December 13, 2022	May 16, 2023 (Budget and Trustee Vote)
January 10, 2023	June 13, 2023
February 14, 2023	

### The 2022-2023 Board of Education:

Renee Wilson, President	Heather DuBard, Trustee	Paul A. Nazzarett, Jr., Trustee
Edward Schaefer, Vice President	Carol Kiripolsky, Trustee	Derrick Warburton, Trustee
Yvonne Douglass, Trustee		

To reach a Board member by telephone, please call the Board Clerk at (716) 686-3606. The Board Clerk will relay your message to the appropriate Board member. Your call will be returned as soon as possible.

## District News

### Pesticide Notification

New York State Education Law Section 409-11 requires all public and non-public schools to provide notification to all persons in parental relation, faculty and staff about pesticide applications. The Cheektowaga Central School District currently uses integrated pest management practices and the least toxic approach to managing pests. Although we do not anticipate the application of a pesticide in any of our school buildings, we will place any interested person's name on a list for 48-hour prior notification of pesticide use, as required by New York State Education Law. To receive 48-hour notification of pesticide application, complete the accompanying form and fax it to (716) 681-5232, or return it to Bruce Vona, Director of Facilities, Cheektowaga Central School District, 3600 Union Road, Cheektowaga, NY 14225.

**Cheektowaga Central School District**  
Request for 48-Hour Notice of Pesticide Application (please print clearly)

School Building: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Day telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Evening telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Homecoming Week Cont'd from page 1



## Student School Day

Daily class time schedules for the 2022-23 school year are:

Note: All buildings: one-hour early dismissal every Wednesday

- Union East Elementary (students may not be dropped off before 8:40 a.m.)
  - UPK - Grade 4: 9:00 a.m. - 3:25 p.m.
- Middle School (students may not be dropped off before 7:45 a.m.)
  - Grades 5-8: 8:06 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- High School (students may not be dropped off before 7:00 a.m.)
  - Grades 9-12: 7:22 a.m. - 1:47 p.m.
- Early Dismissal Schedule:
  - Union East: 12:00 p.m.
  - Middle School: 11:10 a.m.
  - High School: 10:22 a.m.

## School Office Hours

- Central/Business Offices  
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Union East Elementary School  
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- Middle School 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- High School 6:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

## Keep Us Informed...

Please help keep the school records current by letting the school know about your new address, work telephone numbers, new babysitter numbers, or new home phone numbers. At times, it is extremely important for school personnel to reach parents (i.e. in case of an emergency). To reach any building, phone (716) 686-3600.



### District Vision

To Inspire  
\*\*\*\*

### District Mission

To inspire a high level of learning for all  
\*\*\*\*

### District Priorities

- Learning
- The whole child
- 21st Century skills

# Kindness Connection Walk

Mrs. Argento's UPK class and Mrs. Damiani's 4th grade class took a walk together on a beautiful day. We are Kindness Connection buddies!



## Welcome to our New Staff Members

Union East Elementary School has welcomed a number of new staff members for the 2022-23 school year. We are excited to welcome:

- Ms. Aleyshka Adorno, Teacher Aide
- Ms. Masuma Akther, Teacher Aide
- Ms. Nikia Benjamin, Teacher Aide
- Mr. Akter Chowdhury, Cafeteria Monitor
- Ms. Nadia Chowdhury, Cafeteria Monitor
- Ms. Kasey Cooley, TESOL
- Ms. Sharnelle Jones, Grade 1
- Ms. Emily Herzig, TESOL
- Mrs. Melissa Kayes, Teacher Aide
- Mrs. Mary Jean Lelek, Teacher Aide
- Ms. Emily Marino, Building Based Substitute
- Ms. Jada McClendon, Grade 1
- Mrs. Shalyn Newby, Special Education
- Ms. Tonisha Patterson, Teacher Aide
- Mrs. Rebecca Potter, Teacher Aide
- Mrs. Katelyn Reed, Cafeteria Monitor
- Ms. Janay Williams, Teacher Aide
- Ms. Grace Windschitl, Grade 3
- Mrs. Laura Zebrowski, Cafeteria Monitor

# Union East Elementary News

## Experiencing the Falls

Fourth grade students enjoyed a fall field trip to Niagara Falls. Students were able to experience the Maid of the Mist and the Cave of the Winds attractions. This trip was completely funded through the Connecting Students with Parks Grant.



## Warriors of the Month

During the month of September, our Warriors were focused on following each of our 5 B's, with a special emphasis on being "on time and ready," as well as, being "responsible." Based on teacher nominations, a student from each grade level was recognized by Project Positive, during the Warrior of the Month assembly.

### September student Warriors of the Month:

- Sophia H., UPK
- King D., Kindergarten
- Jubaer R., Grade 1
- Fareeha H., Grade 2
- Maxwell S., Grade 3
- Thomas B., Grade 4



Staff members were also nominated by their colleagues for Warrior of the Month. The criteria for a staff nomination is someone who has gone above and beyond the call of duty to support our student warriors both instructionally and socially/emotionally.

### September staff Warriors of the Month:

- Mrs. Mary Jean Lelek
- Ms. Danielle Scott



# Cheektowaga Middle School News

## Department News

### English Language Arts

Middle School English Language Arts classes recently began their first Reading and Writing Workshop units. Fifth and sixth graders are currently working on narrative writing that involves students generating writing pieces and conferencing with teachers for feedback to improve their writing. Teachers will use data from this writing exercise to create strategy groups and meet individual student needs.

During September, readers in all grade levels selected books from classroom libraries to read during class, and library visits began in October. In addition to classroom reading, students should read at home each night.



### Math

This year, Cheektowaga Central Middle School will use the Illustrative Mathematics Curriculum (IM). IM Math is a problem-based core curriculum designed to address content and practice standards to foster learning for all. Students learn by doing math, solving problems in mathematical and real-world contexts, and constructing arguments using precise language. Teachers facilitate student learning with high-leverage routines to guide learners to understand and make connections between concepts and procedures. We will also utilize a program called Freckle, which takes the results that each student receives on the STAR Math test and selects skills that the students need to practice to be successful.

- Fifth grade students are learning about volume.
- Sixth grade students are working on area.
- Seventh grade students are exploring scale and scale factor.
- Eighth grade students are practicing translations, rotations, and reflections, and are examining how shapes and coordinates change when each of these transformations are performed.
- Eighth grade honors class is learning the difference between linear and exponential functions, how to recognize each one given information, and how to write equations for the situation.

Students in grades 6-8 utilize a platform called Desmos to access the IM curriculum. Desmos activities utilizes both Chromebook and paper activities to enhance the IM curriculum. Learn more about the IM curriculum online at [im.kendallhunt.com](http://im.kendallhunt.com) and [illustrativemathematics.org](http://illustrativemathematics.org).

### Reading

The Middle School's core reading curriculum has been built around the Lucy Calkins' Reader's Workshop Units of Study. This program models instruction that focuses on the work of the reader. Teachers model and directly teach skills and strategies that proficient readers use. Students will learn strategies that can be applied to many types of reading; therefore, students have the opportunity to self-select books and read a wide variety of text. Daily, students engage in a mini-lesson, independent reading, small-group instruction, and conferring. Students also have opportunities to discuss and write about they've read.

### Science

The middle school science classes will utilize an interactive computer based program called Amplify Science this year. The program includes the use of simulations and other integrated activities.

- Fifth grade students will be exploring Matter and Chemical Reactions while creating a homemade salad dressing based on chemical interactions.
- Sixth grade students will learn how Physical Science, including forces, motion, energy and their interactions, are used in everyday life.
- Seventh grade students will learn the way the Earth systems interact and form our climate. Weather Patterns, Rock Cycle and the Sun and Moon are some of the major topics they will be studying.
- Eighth grade students will enter the world of Life Science and learn about Ecology, Human Body Systems and Energy by exploring genetics and manipulate the genes of spiders to create a unique super spider.
- Living Environment students will focus on the interactions between biotic and abiotic factors in ecosystems as well as the chemical processes that occur within cells and the human body.

### Social Studies

The 5-8 curriculum covers a lot of historical, geographic, economic, governmental and cultural topics; both Worldwide and in the USA.

- Fifth grade students will create world maps and then a map of their own fictional country. 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.
- Sixth Grade students will review their map skills before heading back in time to learn how our prehistoric ancestors lived. As these people learned to farm, small farming villages grew into larger towns and cities. These cities will become the earliest civilizations that will be the focus of our sixth grade students moving forward.
- Seventh grade students began their studies this year with the Native Americans and explore the New York State Iroquois tribe. They will move on to study the Age of Exploration and the creation of the 13 Colonies and finish out with a unit on how the 13 Colonies thrived in America.
- Eighth grade students are studying the War on Terrorism by discussing the September 11th attacks that took place in N.Y.C. and at the Pentagon in Washington D.C. Their next unit of study will be the Reconstruction Unit where students will learn about the struggles our nation faced as we put our nation back together after the Civil War.

*Continued on next page.*

# Department News cont'd. from page 5

## World Language

Connect with the World Language Staff:

- 7th Grade Spanish, Mr. Bengert, [bbengert@ccsd-k12.net](mailto:bbengert@ccsd-k12.net)
- 8th Grade Spanish, Mrs. Todaro, [ctodaro@ccsd-k12.net](mailto:ctodaro@ccsd-k12.net)
- 7th & 8th Grade French, Mrs. Bierasinski, [tbierasinski@ccsd-k12.net](mailto:tbierasinski@ccsd-k12.net)

What we're learning:

- Spanish classes will be talking about "Día de los Muertos" in the month of October.
- French classes will be learning about "La Toussaint" in early November.

Did you know that 8th grade students will earn their High School Foreign Language credit this year?

## Learning about Volume

During a recent lesson, fifth graders built objects by connecting cubes and then found their volume. Next, they ordered the objects from least to greatest volume along the classroom counter. Students have built a variety of objects and then found the volume of each other's creations.



# Cheektowaga Middle School News

## Reading Labs

### Making Reading a 10-out-of-10

Our fifth grade readers recently had a lively discussion about making Reading a 10-out-of-10. We talked about how to really find books that are "just right":

- They aren't too hard or too easy
- They are the kinds of books you like
- The characters and the plot pull you in
- Others recommend them

Students have successfully found their "just right" books and are enjoying reading them.

### "Just Right" Books

Sixth grade students are selecting independent reading books that are "just right" for them as well as building a routine in the Reading Lab. Students recently learned what it means to have reading stamina and have been working on reading nonstop for 30 minutes straight.

As students are progressing through their independent fiction books, they are thinking about the character(s), setting and problem/struggle the character is facing and stop to jot this information down in their reading notebooks.

### Establishing Reading Habits

Mrs. Maloney's and Ms. Wark's seventh and eighth grade reading classes have been working hard to establish strong independent reading habits. Students have been introduced to different genres of books, and will begin working on reading comprehension skills. The first skill we will be introducing is visualizing and why it is so important. Students will be reading various short stories and articles together to practice learned skills throughout the year.



# High School News

## Welcome to our New Staff Members

The high school would like to give a warm welcome to our new staff:

- Soren Bakken-Heck, Science Teacher
- Danielle Blaszczyk, Personal Aide
- Jihad Butler, Building Sub
- Ashley Cohen, Librarian
- Ami Jariwala, Special Education Teacher
- Stephen Kelly, Social Studies Teacher
- Tiffany Latshaw, Classroom Aide
- Richard Lewis, Hall Monitor
- Sue McCormack, English Teacher
- Scott Rizzo, Science Teacher
- Carly Shifflet, Health Teacher
- Nancy Trotta, Clerical

In addition, the following staff have been with the district but are new to the high school:

- Rhonda Drzewiecki, Teacher Assistant
- Kimberly Nichols, Counselor
- Lisa Powers, Special Ed
- Demario Rhodes, Counselor

## Opening Week

Opening week for the high school incorporated several presentations. Students rotated through workshops about:

- social media safety tips - presented by the FBI
- the importance of mental health balance - presented by Renaissance House
- the requirements & pathways available for graduation - reviewed by the principal
- the components of the code of conduct - reviewed by the assistant principals
- the services available to students - reviewed by the counseling staff
- how to be successful in HS and beyond - presented by an alumni panel

Students also participated in team building activities, cooperative games and an outdoor lunch while staff participated in professional learning surrounding restorative practices, digital learning standards and data informed instruction. It was a strong start to what promises to be a successful year.



## Class of 2022 Top 10

1. **Abby Bellaus**  
Daemen Veterinarian
2. **Carlie Bryant**  
UB Pharmacy
3. **Alyssa Nguyen**  
UB Finance
4. **Jenna Stroud**  
UB Nursing and Dancing
5. **Sarah Woelffel**  
Medaille Biology
6. **Mia Polizzi**  
UB English
7. **Madison Walczak**  
Daemen Nursing
8. **Gracie Amanti**  
Environmental Science and Forestry College
9. **Camila Lucas**  
UB Medial Technology
10. **Haley Nastaga**  
ECC Mathematics





**CHEEKTOWAGA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
3600 Union Road  
Cheektowaga, NY 14225

**Non-Profit  
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Buffalo, NY**

## Community Corner

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

#### Grades 6-12

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:

- Nov. 7, 2022      • March 20, 2023
- Jan. 23, 2023    • April 17, 2023
- Feb. 13, 2023

### The Link: WNY’s Family and Caregiver Group

Are you a parent of a child with disabilities or do you suspect they have a disability and are looking to feel less overwhelmed and feel a sense of belonging? Get the support you need from the Parent Network of WNY, Empower, and other groups.

Join us on Zoom! First Monday of the Month at 6:30 p.m. where we will discuss topics such as: Special Education, Sensory Processing Disorders, Autism, Learning Disabilities and more.

For more information or to register, call (716) 332-4170 or email [info@parentnetworkwny.org](mailto:info@parentnetworkwny.org)

### Now Hiring in Cheektowaga

- Aeropostale, Walden Galleria Mall
- Chipotle
- Constanzo’s Bakery
- Journey’s, Walden Galleria Mall
- McDonald’s
- Panera Bread
- Pet Supplies Plus

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 any application.

### Cheektowaga Youth & Recreation

#### Lifeguard Training

Location: Cleveland Hill Schools  
Begins Feb. 2, 2023

#### CPR/AED/First Aid for the Professional Rescuer

Location: Alexander Community Center  
Thursday, Jan. 19-March 30, 2023  
5:30-8:30 p.m.

If interested: email [tpetranchuk@tocny.org](mailto:tpetranchuk@tocny.org) or call (716) 897-7207 ext. 6651.

Participants must be at least 15 years of age by the end of the course.

### 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.

