Engaging, Learning, Included.



Thank you for continuing to read our new newsletter, District Dispatch. We have many things to celebrate and also much work to do. This newsletter will keep you informed of the great things that we are seeing from the district level of our school system. Our staff members and families are critical pieces in our plans to grow and improve CSDNB. Thank you for taking the time to stay in touch with us!


Superintendent Tony Gasper



A Publication of the Consolidated School District of New Britain


Celebrating new friendships at Chamberlain Elementary School

Engaging, Learning, Included
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VOLUME 2 / ISSUE 02

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Special Thanks to:
Members of the Senior Leadership Team and CSDNB staff members who have contributed updates \& photos.

Scan below!



In partnership with family and community, the Consolidated School District of New Britain works to provide the best personalized and comprehensive whole-child education at every level so students will be prepared for, and positively contribute to, a profoundly different future.

## NEW BRITAIN BOARD OF EDUCATION

Gayle Sanders-Connolly, President<br>Merrill Gay, Vice President<br>Joseph Listro, Secretary<br>Anthony Cane<br>Monica Dawkins<br>Anthony Kane<br>Barbara Marino<br>Annie Parker<br>Diana Reyes<br>Tina Santana

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Jeffrey Prokop, Chief Information Officer
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Mark Spalding, Director of Pupil Services
Diana Rios, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
Ryan Langer, Communications Officer

## SUPERINIENDENT 9$)$ RECOGNITION



Joseph Body / Rosa Ortiz
DiLoreto Elementary and Middle School


Sue Brigandi, Smith Elementary School fifth grade teacher, was nominated to receive the Superintendent Challenge Coin by Karen Falvey, Smith Principal for her dedication to the Smith students. Brigandi's belief in all students' ability to learn and to succeed has made an incredible difference for many. Her belief and impact is further illustrated when reviewing her students' test scores and growth.

# Engaging, Learning, Included. 



## New Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program Opens at Chamberlain Elementary School

For years, one fifth grader at Chamberlain Elementary School has refused to wear her hearing aids for fear of standing out or being different. But in just one month, that's all changed with the completion of the renovation project at Chamberlain and the opening of CSDNB's new Deaf and Hard of Hearing program.
"Socially, it can be hard when you have these things on your head, other kids are asking you about them, and you don't want to be different. But we've had really great things already happen in the month we've been here," said Julia Leitao, Chamberlain Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. "We've had a fifth grader who has refused to wear her hearing aids for years and now has two other girls in her class with them. She's now wearing them every day because it's cool for her now. That's the biggest thing for our team. Making our students feel like they can be successful just like their peers in the inclusion setting."

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing program brings together students from all corners of the district, creating a space where children with varying degrees of hearing can learn
and grow together, normalizing and celebrating diversity in a way that benefits everyone.
"Our students used to be so spread out. Now they typically have 2-3 kids in their class with them who listen like them or have the same equipment as them. That's been really heartwarming to see," said Leitao.

While Leitao was the first district hired Deaf and Hard of Hearing teacher, she credits Kelly Cimma, contracted consultant and Teacher of the Deaf, for helping to build the foundation of the program here in New Britain.
"For a long time, it was just Kelly and CT Ears servicing students in all schools. They were really able to build the capacity within the district to get us to where we are today. I went to New Britain schools and am so thankful my family chose to raise me here. It feels really fulfilling to come back to this community and be on the side of something so new that gives us a positive light where other districts are calling us and asking us about our program and asking if their kids can join us."
"In the past month I have seen my child engage more as he's had the ability to be a part of a normal school environment and not be singled out."


Chamberlain student plays with a Barbie doll fitted with hearing aids, part of Mattel's new 'Fashionista' series of dolls designed for kids to 'see themselves reflected.'

Leitao said the program has created a sense of community for families who have been able to come together to form a support system in addition to providing a unique learning experience for students and fostering a sense of inclusivity building-wide.
"In the past month I have seen my child engage more as he's had the ability to be a part of a normal school environment and not be singled out," said Angelis Santana whose son is a second grader in the program. "He's motivated and wants to learn more. I feel like being included in the program at Chamberlain has given him the chance to do that. He knows he's not the only kid that wears Cochlear Implants and it's a normal thing."

One of the standout features of the new program is an audiology testing booth. This cutting-edge technology allows for comprehensive testing and assessment of students' hearing abilities, ensuring that each child receives the individualized support they need to thrive academically and socially.
"The audiology booth in a school setting is definitely unique," said Leitao. "The booth gives us the opportunity to be able to fix something that's not working for a student right away. It's such a relief for families that our audiologist can come in and we can figure it out while they're at school."

For Leitao, the impact of this program extends far beyond her classroom walls and is an incredible example of how we can build a more inclusive society, one that values and supports every individual.
"Our students don't just have the support of our program staff, they have the support of our whole school. Our principal has been great about asking to learn signs, asking us to make videos of signs. Just like the equipment, it makes it more common and less embarrassing. It's making it the norm," said Leitao. "The entire staff is open and understanding and in awe of what our kids face every day to keep up. The inclusive environment gives our students the support to ensure they're successful and it's the gold standard. I think our program is the definition of inclusion and it makes me very proud."


From left to right: Julia Leitao, Kelly Cimma, Katherine Sullivan


DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION
Every Child Feels Welcomed and Valued


## Smalley Elementary Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

For the students and staff at Smalley Elementary School, Hispanic Heritage Month is a time to recognize, honor, and embrace the diverse and invaluable contributions of Hispanic and Latinx communities to society. The Smalley staff, and Multicultural Committee, is creating opportunities for students and staff to connect and celebrate the cultures of one another in a variety of ways.
"Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month in school is so important because it honors our students' culture. At Smalley our Hispanic/Latino students make up $78.3 \%$ of our school population and $27 \%$ make up our Multilingual Learners," said Arleen Torres Ruiz, Smalley Elementary School Assistant Principal and Puerto Rican. "This month is a celebration of them, it's a celebration of who they are and their roots."

Educators play a pivotal role in shaping the minds of future leaders, innovators, and change-makers with the power to inspire a deep appreciation for the heritage, history, and achievements of Hispanic and Latinx individuals, both past and present.
"I am most proud of how our staff has embraced our Latino community at Smalley. They are so creative and always advocate for celebrating our students every time they can. Our Smalley team is more than a team, they are truly a family who celebrate not only our students but our staff members," said Torres Ruiz.

Across the district, CSDNB staff, like those at Smalley, are actively engaging learners to honor the rich cultural contributions of Hispanic and Latinx communities in a variety of ways such as guest speakers, collaboration, library resources and research, open discussions and a continued focus on a diverse curriculum. These learning opportunities often open the door for increased connections for both students and staff.
"I have a lot of multicultural books in my room and I see firsthand what a big deal it is for kids when they see their culture represented in a book," said Emily Bugnacki, Smalley Teacher. "My family is from Ecuador and growing up I didn't know anyone from Ecuador. Making that connection is not
"Hispanic/Latino students make up 78.3\% of our school population and 27\% make up our Multilingual Learners. This month is a celebration of them,
something that always comes easily but through our work I'm making connections with kids who are not even my students. I had this little girl come up to me and tell me she saw me in the slideshow. She was so proud to tell me she is from Educor too. That's the biggest thing, to be proud of where you come from and we are trying to celebrate that."

The Smalley team also put together a slideshow for all teachers to share and decorated the school hallways with traditional Papel Picado, which means 'punched paper,' student made flowers, flags, and a large world map featuring the flags of many Hispanic and Latinx countries.
"The map is a point of engagement for kids to tell us where they are from. I hear the kids walking in the hallway saying that's my flag and it's neat to hear the pride amongst our students," said Bugnacki.

Smalley still has more planned including an upcoming assembly with an educational musical guest, a building parade featuring music, dancing, singing, and cultural clothing, and much more.
"Teaching students about the contributions from well known Hispanic Americans can encourage them and give them inspiration that they are capable of also doing amazing things," said Sorangel Junquera, a proud Cuban and Smalley Paraeducator. "The most memorable experience so far is getting to know about other cultures and see our students enjoy all the activities and lessons that our school is doing." By actively participating in Hispanic Heritage Month celebrations, Smalley is not only enriching their students' educational experience but also promoting a more inclusive and equitable school environment empowering students to be more culturally aware.
"One of my favorite quotes is by John Leguizamo who said, 'When Latinx kids don't see themselves represented on stage or film or television or newspapers or history textbooks, what they're told is, you don't matter. But when they see themselves represented, then they are told you are important. You are authors. You are scientists. You are explorers. You are special. You are leaders. You are respected. You are the reason we are here,' said Amanda Andrews, Smalley Teacher and proud Puerto Rican. " It is so important for all of our students to feel seen and heard, especially during a time in which their culture is being celebrated."


Smalley Elementary staff pose in hallways decorated by school's Multicultural Committee


## 

## What's New and Happening at CSDNB?



NEW PLAYGROUND OPEN AT SMITH
In September, Mayor Erin Stewart hosted a beautiful ribbon-cutting ceremony at Smith Elementary School's new playground. We would like to thank Mayor Stewart and The City of New Britain Commission on Community and Neighborhood Development for making this new playground possible through a generous donation from the Mayor's Trophy Charitable Fund and all of the guests, city common council members, and dignitaries who joined us for the celebration!



NBHS JUNIOR CHOSEN TO REPRESENT NBHS AT ANNUAL STATE-WIDE CONFERENCE
Two years ago, Elias, a junior at New Britain High School, was chosen to participate in the Special Education Youth Advisory Council (SEYAC) through the State Education Resource Center (SERC). SEYAC is designed to increase student involvement in the Special Education process as well as to develop effective leadership skills.
"Elias has shown strong leadership skills in SEYAC and was an easy choice when thinking of someone to represent New Britain High School and special education said Stephen Howey, CSDNB Coordinator of Special Education for grades 9-12. "Elias is a student who is always willing to share his thoughts and ideas.'

This year, Elias was chosen to be a voice for special education students across the state of Connecticut at the CT State Department of Education's annual Back to School Conference. Elias recorded a video that was shared with hundreds of leaders from across the state of CT. His video received a rousing round of applause! Elias's presentation left such a good impression on state leaders that it has led him to another opportunity as he has been selected by SERC to be a panel member at an upcoming PPT leadership training to represent the student's perspective in PPT meetings. When Elias is not sharing his voice, and studying for school, he is also a member of the NBHS football team

## What's New and Happening at CSDNB?



## EARLY DISMISSAL OCTOBER 18

Don't forget! Wednesday, October 18, is a scheduled early dismissal for all students throughout the district.

For a full look at our district calendar, see page 25 of this newsletter.


BECOMING THE BEACON
Last month, Eileen Marquez, CSDNB Teacher of the Year, hosted several visitors from Newington Public Schools who came to observe her classroom.

Ms. Marquez is a teacher in the NBHS Public Service Academy and a committed advisor to the Educators Rising Club recognized for her work molding future educators. We love every opportunity we can get to visit her room and see these future educators learning by doing firsthand, leading lessons to their own peers under Ms. Marquez's leadership.

We thank the Newington team for their visit and look forward to continued shared partnership and learning!


GOODWIN UNIVERSITY BRINGS MANUFACTURING LAB TO NBHS
Students in the New Britain High School Academy of Manufacturing, and Technology had the chance to use the Goodwin University Mobile Manufacturing Lab at New Britain High School. The 44-foot-long unit is a mobile lab that brings the college experience on the road, connecting students to may not otherwise have access to training, and introducing them to a world of career possibilities. The state-of-the-art classroom created a great learning opportunity for NBHS students and we appreciate the continued partnership with Goodwin University!




## DISTRICTIUPAIES

## What's New and Happening at CSDNB?



## DISTRICTUPaAIES

## What's New and Happening at CSDNB?



SMITH SCHOOL OPEN A HOUSE A HIT!
The Smith Elementary School Open House Picnic was one to remember! An incredible amount of families come out to connect with their school community and enjoy pizza and apple fritters thanks to some help from Grace Church and Pastor Mills.

We thank the entire Smith School community for making the event so successful and look forward to many more nights like this during the 2023-2024 school year!



MOVING THE NEEDLE ON ACADEMIC SUCCESS
The results are in, and we're moving the needle on academic success within our school district!
"We are not perfect, but we are making notable progress and that is what's important," said Mayor Erin Stewart in a Facebook post. "Over the past year alone we have seen encouraging improvements in our standardized test scores across multiple schools and grade levels that are encouraging places to start as we head into this new academic year."

The numbers don't lie. DiLoreto 3rd grade English Language Arts scores increased 5.7\% and 5th grade Math scores increased 7.7\% within the past year. Vance Elementary School saw a $7.1 \%$ increase in their 4th grade English Language Arts scores, while Slade Middle School noted an 8\% increase in English Language Arts scores this past year. Most notably, at Smith Elementary School there was a 13.9\% increase in 5th grade Math scores and a 26.9\% increase in English Language Arts scores in one single year.



## DISTRICTIUPaIES

## What's New and Happening at CSDNB?



## What's New and Happening at CSDNB?



## SMALLEY STUDENTS MAKE THEIR MARK

On September 15, Smalley Elementary School celebrated International Dot Day (a global celebration of creativity, courage and collaboration). Students participated in several activities, including digital breakout rooms in their STEAM classes, after reading the book.

The Dot is the story of a caring teacher who dares a doubting student to trust in her own abilities by being brave enough to "make her mark". What begins with a small dot on a piece of paper becomes a breakthrough in confidence and courage, igniting a journey of self-discovery and sharing, which has gone on to inspire countless children and adults around the globe.

Each year on International Dot Day - with the help of people just like you - the inspiration continues. What started as a story in the pages of a book is transforming teaching and learning around the world as people of all ages re-discover the power and potential of creativity in all they do.



## NBHS CELEBRATES

 INTERNATIONAL PEACE DAYThe New Britain High School Peace Room invited students and staff to celebrate the International Day of Peace together outside NBHS. The team introduced the building's new Student Ambassadors of Peace and discussed what actions of peace mean to them. Check out the NBHS Peace Pole's new home on the corner of the student parking lot and Mill Street next time you are at NBHS!

A Peace Pole is an internationallyrecognized symbol of the hopes and dreams of the entire human family, standing vigil in silent prayer for peace on earth.




## LINCOLN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HOSTS BRICEYDA LANDAVERDE

As Hispanic Heritage Month continues, we want to thank NBC Connecticut's Briceyda Landaverde for joining us at Lincoln Elementary School to inspire future journalists.

Landaverde spoke to about 90 fifth-graders about both her career and Hispanic roots. Conversations focused on the importance of education, being bilingual, and overcoming adversity. About $80 \%$ of the population at Lincoln is Hispanic and/or Latinx.
"Hispanic month means to me a celebration for people who speak Spanish", said Angel Gonzalez Navarro, a student.


CHAMBERLAIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY
We thank everyone who joined us last month at Chamberlain Elementary School for the new building's official Ribbon Cutting and Dedication Ceremony.
"As we gather to cut this ribbon, let us continue to support one another, and foster a culture of inclusivity and respect," said Principal Manuel Zaldivar. "Together, we will make this new building the place where we will all demonstrate that Chamberlain CARES through Character, Achievement, Relationships, and Expectations that will lead to success."

The renovation project at Chamberlain Elementary School broke ground In the summer of 2021 after New Britain benefited from a state package that ensured funding reimbursement for $95 \%$ of the project through the state's school construction grant program.

## What's New and Happening at CSDNB?

## CELEBRATING OUR NEW ADMINISTRATORS

At their August and September Board of Education meetings, The New Britain Board of Education voted to approve the appointment of five individuals to administrator roles. Their years of service and expertise in their respective areas are expected to strengthen CSDNB's leadership team and positively impact student outcomes.


KEIRA SOLER
Assistant Coordinator of School Culture PK-12



## 

## What's New and Happening at CSDNB?




OCTOBER TECH TIP: CREATING A STUDENT TECH HELP TICKET IN POWERSCHOOL
Need assistance with your student device? Is your account not working as it should? Use the Student Tech Help Form in PowerSchool to get the help you need! Here is a short video walkthrough of the Student Tech Ticketing System - A one-stop shop for reporting all tech issues for a student. The same form is used to report both student device issues as well as account issues for all students. Anyone can fill out this form!

Please use the QR code to watch the video walkthrough. The video is also accessible in the Parent Tech Support Section linked on the csdnb.org website.



## 2023-24 STUDENT DEVICE INSURANCE IS AVAILABLE

Last year we had over 1800 students participating in the student device insurance program and honored over 1100 claims. Student Device Insurance is now available for purchase through the My School Bucks store. 503 have enrolled so far in the first month. Let's continue the trend and enroll more students than last year! Thank you to those who have already enrolled. Details on the student device insurance program can be found on our district website: www.csdnb.org/csd-nb-student-device-insurance.php or by scanning code below:


## DISTRICTWIDE COPIER FLEET UPDATE

After going through a competitive bid process in the spring, the school district is nearing completion on the replacement and deployment of multifunctional copiers throughout the district. The project involved replacing over 100 devices in every building throughout the school district, while minimizing disruption to services as much as possible. Special thanks to our MIS staff who have been working hard and closely with our new vendor to roll out the devices and support to school staff during this transition.

#  

## Staff Shoutouts



MELISSA QUALLS
Teacher
Jefferson Elementary School


JADANIQUE WHITE
Paraeducator
Roosevelt Early Learning Center


TINA BENACQUISTO
Breakfast/Lunch Aide Holmes Elementary School


ROLANDA BOOKER
Principal
Northend Elementary School


## csons Suniles

September 2023



## csons Suniles

September 2023




## WORD OF ADVICE: <br> Insure your student's device...

Just

$\$ 201$ /wimprovides accidental coverage for your student's device

# CSDNB'S STUDENT DEVICE INSURANCE PROGRAM 

We all know accidents happen.
Without CSDNB's Student Device Insurance Program, you could be on the hook for costly repairs and replacement costs.*

The Student Device Insurance Program is designed to protect students and families in the event that a CSDNB-issued device is damaged or malfunctions due to no fault of the student.*

Don't let an accident ruin your day, enroll today!

Sign up is easy with MySchoolBucks! MySchoolBucks Store is accessible through PowerSchool Parent Portal.

## The NBHS Choral Department presents

## nonumnan onces:

 $\sim$ a Chorahshowcase ~ . - TOSGJINOAn evening of Choral music, solos and ensembles from stage and screen


Werrosday 0etom R
S5 Suggested Donation at Door

## ~ Snackes E Drinks ~

## CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN

## We invite you to join our FREE



Sing-a-longs, crafts, story time, pretend play, and more!
Our Play and Learn Groups allow children from birth to age 4 to engage in group activity and learn through play, preparing them for school success! Groups are also a great opportunity for adults to connect with other adults and to receive child development and parenting information.

## Play and Learn Groups are FREE!

(Parents, guardians, grandparents, and expecting mothers are welcome to join!)

## Dates \& Times:

To Be Decided
Locations:
Family Resource Center at Chamberlain Elementary School 120 Newington Avenue, New Britain, CT 06051

Family Resource Center at Jefferson Elementary School 140 Horse Plain Road, New Britain, CT 06051

Family Resource Center at Smith Elementary School 142 Rutherford Street, New Britain, CT 06051

| Districtwide |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| = Holiday (Schools/District Closed) |  |
| O No School = Half Day $\quad$ = Professional Development |  |
| August 23 Convocation AM/Building Meetings PM |  |
| August 23, 24, 25 Professional Development |  |
| August 28 First Day of School (Full Day) |  |
| September 4 Labor Day |  |
| October 9 Indigenous Peoples Day |  |
| October 18 Prof. Dev. (Half Day for Students) |  |
| November 7 Election Day, Prof. Dev. (No School for Students) |  |
| November 10 Veterans Day Observed |  |
| November 22 Half Day |  |
| November 23-24 Thanksgiving Recess |  |
| December 21 Half Day |  |
| December 22-January 1 Winter Break |  |
| January 5 Three Kings' Day Observed |  |
| January 15 Martin Luther King Day |  |
| January 31 Prof. Dev. (Half Day for Students) |  |
| February 16 Lincoln's Birthday Observed |  |
| February 19 President's Day |  |
| March 4 Prof. Dev. (No School for Students) |  |
| March 29 Good Friday |  |
| April 8-12 April Break |  |
| May 15 Prof. Dev. (Half Day for Students) |  |
| May 27 Memorial Day |  |
| June 7 Last Day of School (Early Dismissal) |  |
| June 19 Juneteenth Holiday |  |
| Special Observance Days |  |
| Faculty will make appropriate accommodations for students affected by these and other special observance days. |  |
| Sep. 15-17 Rosh Hashanah | Mar. 31-Apr. 6 Bright Week |
| Sep. 24-25 Yom Kippur | Mar. 10-Apr. 9 Ramadan |
| Sep. 29-Oct. 6 Sukkot | Apr 9-10 Eid al-Fitr |
| Nov. 12 Diwali | Apr. 22-30 Passover |
| Mar. 25 Holi | June 17 Eid al-Adha |

Pre-K A
September 27 PD (Half Day)
$\triangle$ October 25 PD (Half Day)
$\triangle$ November 29 PD (Half Day)
A January 24 PD (Half Day)
$\triangle$ February 28 PD (Half Day)
$\triangle$ March 20 PD (Half Day)
$\triangle$ April 24 PD (Half Day)
$\triangle$ May 29 PD (Half Day)
Elementary School
November 27 End of 1st Trimester
December 12 Conferences (Half Day)

- December 13 Conferences (Half Day)

December 14 (Evening Conferences)
March 6 End of 2nd Trimester

- March 19 Conferences (Half Day

March 20 Conferences (Half Day)
March 21 (Evening Conferences)
June 7 End of 3rd Trimester
Middle School
August 25 Grade 6 Only First Day (Half Day)
November 27 End of 1st Trimester

- December 12 Conferences (Half Day)
- December 13 Conferences (Half Day)

December 14 (Evening Conferences)
March 6 End of 2nd Trimester

- March 19 Conferences (Half Day
- March 20 Conferences (Half Day)

March 21 (Evening Conferences)
June 7 End of 3rd Trimester

## High School

August 21 Freshmen Orientation (10:00AM)
August 25 Freshmen Only First Day (Half Day)
August 28 First Day of School - All Grades
September 28 Q1 Progress Reports Available in PowerSchool
September 28 Open House (6:00-8:00PM)
October 30 End of Quarter 1
November 3 Q1 Report Cards Available in PowerSchool
November 6 Fall Conferences (6:00-8:00PM)
December 6 Q2 Progress Reports Available in PowerSchool
January 17 End of Quarter 2
January 18 Second Semester Begins
January 23 Q2 Report Cards Available in PowerSchool
February 21 Q3 Progress Reports Available in PowerSchool
March 22 End of Quarter 3
March 28 Q3 Report Cards Available in PowerSchool
March 29 Tentative SAT School Day (Half Day)
April 2 Spring Conferences (6:00-8:00PM)
May 1 Q4 Progress Reports Available in PowerSchool
May 8 Senior Presentations (Half Day)
May 15 Senior Presentations (Half Day)
June 3-6 Final Exams
June 7 Last Day of School (Half Day) (Make-up day)
June 7 End of Quarter 4
June 10 Q4 Report Cards Available in PowerSchool
June 11 Graduation (Tentative)


In partnership with family and community, the Consolidated School District of New Britain works to provide the best personalized and comprehensive whole-child education at every level so students will be prepared for, and positively contribute to, a profoundly different future.

The Consolidated School District of New Britain strives to pursue excellence one student at a time.

