

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER



CONEMAUGH TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT



WELCOME TO THE 2019-20 SCHOOL YEAR

Message from Mr. Kakabar, Superintendent

On behalf of the Conemaugh Township Area School District's Board of School Directors and Administration, I would like to welcome our faculty, staff and students back for the 2019-20 school year. While the students were enjoying the summer vacation, we have been very busy making several improvements in both buildings in an effort to improve the student experience at Conemaugh Township.

Academically, we will continue provide a curriculum that is aligned with the Pennsylvania Core Standards and provide our students with the tools they will need to be successful and competitive in the future. Once again, the Middle/High School received a bronze award from US News and World Report for being a top achieving school. In addition, the elementary building continues to score at or near the top when compared to 34 other IU8 school districts in Bedford, Blair, Cambria and Somerset counties. We are very proud of the efforts of both students and staff. With that said, the most significant change to greet students this year will be the addition of numerous new teachers and staff at both buildings.

- ❑ Middle/High School
 - Ashley Kopp (Special Education)
 - Math (TBA)
 - English World Language (TBA)
- ❑ Elementary
 - Seth Keafer (Elementary/Special Education)
 - Rosie Thomas (Secretary)
 - Becca Blough (Americorps Member)
- ❑ Both Buildings
 - Lindsie Hammaker (Speech Language Pathologist)

Mr. Ed Slonka, Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds, and his staff have also been very busy this summer. Both maintenance crews worked extremely hard to get the buildings ready to go for the start of school. In addition, two projects were completed at the middle/high school in preparation for the new year; a new secured entry that will be used for all visitors once the students have arrived and a renovation of the entire courtyard. These two projects will enhance the safety of students and staff and will provide handicapped accessibility to the courtyard as well as the auditorium and new visitor entrance.

As you can see, we are moving progressively forward. It is and always will be our goal to provide the students and community of Conemaugh Township with every opportunity we can. I urge all parents/guardians to get actively involved with your child's education. I also ask that you participate in open house and other parent conferences to see the many good things that your children are accomplishing. Remember, parental support is most important in helping us be successful with your children.

In closing, I want to thank the Conemaugh Township Area Board of School Directors for providing the vision and resources to make all the things we do possible. I also want to remind parents and community members that if at any time you have questions or comments about the school to please contact my office.



Message from Mrs. Nicole M. Dull, Elementary Principal



It is my pleasure to welcome everyone back to school for the 2019-2020 school year. Upon entering the school building this year, you may notice the construction themed decorations adorning our hallways and classrooms. Our focus this year is on problem solving and building upon basic building blocks that encourage students to utilize a growth mindset, restorative justice and courtesy. We have building-wide expectations, recognition and interventions in place which allows for consistency in all areas. When students are struggling with meeting the expectations, WIN (what I need) time will be utilized to foster an understanding of the desired behaviors and how we can repair relationships and make better choices. Your child's teacher will share more information with you on the evening of Open House.

Communication between our school and parents is vital throughout the school year. I always ask that if a parent has a question or concern regarding their child that they first discuss it with the teacher. If it cannot be resolved at that level, you are always welcome to contact me next. Contact information for our teaching staff is located on the CT Elementary Website, found at www.ctasd.org.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our annual Elementary Open House on Thursday, September 12th!

Guidance Office News

New for the 2019-20 school year Mrs. Stroz will be teaching Guidance classes during the second computer specials for grades 1 and 3. Lessons will include developmental career guidance lessons and the Sanford Harmony social emotional learning curriculum. Social emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for being a healthy adult. Lesson units include Diversity & Inclusion, Empathy & Critical Thinking, Communication, Problem Solving and Peer Relationships.

WELCOME

Mr. Seth Keafer will be joining us as our second and third grade special education teacher. Throughout his life, Mr. Seth Keafer has continually discovered a deep passion for the care and guidance of young people in need of patience, compassion, and hope. For the first several years of his educational career, this passion took shape in the form of working directly with students with moderate to severe autism as a teacher assistant in a self-contained classroom. He experienced so much joy while working toward change in the lives of these young people that he was led to pursue his Master of Arts in Teaching in Special Education. His first full-time teaching experience began in South Carolina in 2014 working with elementary-age students, and he has been helping students grow their reading, writing, math, and social skills ever since.

Mr. Keafer grew up in Conemaugh Township, just off Soap Hollow Road. His playground was his grandparent's farm, which led to a lifelong lover of being in the outdoors. He also spent a lot of time going to camps and other youth events. These experiences brought him to pursue his undergraduate degree in Youth Ministry. After college, he married his beautiful wife, Cate. They moved to Nashville, TN where he worked as an education assistant at a youth shelter. In 2009 they decided to follow Cate's parents and transplanted to South Carolina. Seven years ago, their sweet daughter Tennyson was born. Then in 2015 they welcomed their rough-and-tumble son Jude, into their family as well! This summer, they decided to make the move back to Soap Hollow to take over and restore the family farm. Mr. Keafer is very excited about being a part of this wonderful community again, and he can't wait to serve the students and families of Conemaugh Township!

Miss Lindsie Hammaker is very excited to join Conemaugh Township Area School District as a Speech-Language Pathologist. Lindsie is originally from Hollidaysburg, PA and she earned her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in communication disorders at California University of Pennsylvania. After graduating, she worked as a travel speech therapist in Maryland and Pennsylvania in both education and healthcare settings. Lindsie is also excited to continue her love of music in the role of assistant director for the marching band. Outside of work, Lindsie loves being outdoors, especially hiking and camping, reading, swimming, and spending time with family and friends. Lindsie is looking forward to a fantastic year!

Miss Becca Blough believes that language is remarkably influential and that we should always use our words in a way that demonstrates honesty and promotes unity. It is this belief that invited her to start studying English Literature and Writing at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown.

Not too long into her studies, Miss Blough felt an eagerness to expand on her life experiences and began working with children in a before and after school program through The Learning Lamp.

This resulted in a newfound passion for providing direction to children in an empathetic and empowering way.

Shortly before starting her third year of studies at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Miss Blough was offered an Americorps position at Conemaugh Township Area School District. This position excellently integrates Miss Blough's heartfelt belief in the power of language and her passion for educating children.

Miss Blough grew up very close to Conemaugh Township and is eager to go back to her roots. She is overly excited to meet and begin working with some of the many wonderful and exceptional individuals within Conemaugh Township Area School District!

Mrs. Rosie Thomas will be joining us as a secretary in the Elementary School. She is an alumni of the Conemaugh Twp. School and is excited to be back. Rosie has an Associate degree from Mount Aloysius College and a Bachelor degree from Columbia Southern University in Business Management. She has spent the majority of her years employed as a sales executive in the office supply industry. When she is not working she enjoys going to craft shows, reading, crocheting, but mostly spending time with her family and friends. Rosie is looking forward to working here at the school and getting to know the students as well as the staff.

OPEN HOUSE

Open House at the Elementary School will be held on *Thursday, September 12th at 7:00 p.m.* We hope you are able to attend! Parents are encouraged to check out the book fair that night as well.

The Conemaugh Township Parent Teacher Association will have a registration table in the lobby. *Your membership is welcome!* We look forward to seeing you there!

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Please do not drop your child off at the school before 8:30 am. Students may not enter the building in the morning before 8:30 am due to supervision reasons.

Dismissal will begin at 3:35 for walkers, followed by bus dismissal. We ask for your patience during the first week or so to help us ensure we get everyone home in a safe manner. Parents are asked to park in the parking lot outside of the gym. Cars are not permitted to park in the fire lane or along the curb.

SCHOOL SECURITY

Since the safety of our children is one of our most important responsibilities, a security system has been implemented in our schools. Please assist us by respecting the security procedures outlined below.

- **ALL** visitors must use the main entrance at the front of the building.
- After entering through the first set of doors, press the intercom button outside the office door.
- State your name and reason for your visit.
- Wait for office personnel to release the door (clicking sound) before trying to open it.

Pennsylvania State Law requires **ALL** visitors to report to the main office prior to a classroom visit. Visitors will be required to wear a visitor's identification badge. The badge will be issued after registering in the office and should be returned to the office upon completion of your school business. Any items that need delivered to the classroom (i.e., books, homework, snacks, etc.) will be delivered from the office to the classroom in a timely manner. Please note that for security purposes, we will ask for ID when you pick your child up from school. Your cooperation is truly appreciated.

SNACKS

In accordance with the District's Wellness Policy, parents are asked to send in snacks that promote student health and help to reduce childhood obesity. Candy is not permitted to be sent to school as a snack or treat. Drinks are limited to water and/or 100% fruit juice. All snacks should be store bought and include the original packaging. Please check with your child's teacher before sending in a birthday snack. Refraining from sending in cookies and cupcakes is truly appreciated. Rule of thumb for snacks is 150 calories or less.



PLEASE RETURN

We need your help and cooperation in order to best serve you. Please return the following forms to your child's homeroom teacher as quickly as possible.

- *Emergency/Bus Card
- *Lunch Application
- *Media Release Form (*return only if you **DO NOT** want your child's name/photo published*).
- *Handbook Signature Form
- *Dental/Physical Forms (Grades K & 3)

It is extremely important to notify the school with address and telephone number changes!

SCHOOL MEAL REMINDERS

Breakfast is FREE every day! Please encourage your children to participate.

Free and reduced meal applications were sent home on the first day of school. Please fill them out and return them to the office as quickly as possible. If you have received a notice of Direct Certification in the mail, you are already qualified for free meals for the entire school year and you do not need to fill out an application. Families only need to fill out one application for the entire family even if you have students in both schools.

The price of a student lunch is \$2.35. Students at the Elementary School will have their choice of several different meals for lunch. They may choose from the main entrée, daily alternative, chef salad, grilled chicken salad or yogurt meal. Please remember to send your child's lunch money to school in an envelope marked with their name, homeroom teacher, and student number. Any questions should be directed to Adam Thomas 479-2328, adam.thomas@ctasd.org



A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION

We believe a safe, enjoyable bus ride is a big part of your child's school experience and ask your help to ensure your child's bus ride is a positive part of his/her day.

Please be sure to keep us informed of telephone number and/or address changes in case of an emergency and to ensure bus rosters are up-to-date.

We also need all residents to have their house numbers clearly marked and visible from the road so that the drivers can easily identify addresses. This will help the drivers stay on schedule and the bus runs more efficient.

All transportation concerns or questions should be directed to Gina Rembold, Business Manager, at 479-7431, extension 3704. Thank you for your cooperation!



From the PTA

2019 CTES PTA Officers

President: Leisha Black

Vice President: Nicole Moser

Secretary: Michele Zoldey

Treasurer: Kristi Purdy

It is really hard to believe that we are starting a new school year! It feels like just yesterday we were wishing you a safe and fun summer! We hope your summer was wonderful and refreshing and that you're ready to jump right in to the 2019 - 20 school year! We have a lot of fun and exciting things lined up for the year, and we hope that you'll

become a member of the PTA! CT PTA is committed to doing all we can for the teachers and children of CT, and with help from you, we will be able to make this another outstanding school year!

Please join us at the pavilion for the ribbon cutting ceremony on September 19th with a movie to follow. More details will be available soon!!!

COLOR RUN

2019 Little Indians 5K Color Run! Please come join us on Saturday, September 21st, 2019

Registration: 8:00am

Run: 8:30am

Location: CTHS Stadium

Cherrydale Fundraiser

Cherrydale is our BIGGEST fundraiser of the year. Look for details to come home with your child soon!

Cherrydale Kickoff: 8/29

Cherrydale Orders Due: 9/17

Pick up is: 10/30

MegaEvent: 11/1

Chuck e Cheese Day: 11/22

Don't forget to contact Lisa Stevens at (814)-479-7575, at the business office (located at the high school near the gym) to become a 19-20 board approved volunteer. This **MUST** be done yearly to volunteer and participate in events with the students, including marathon fun day, classroom parties, field trips, etc.

Congratulations!!! To Rocco Hagan for creating the winning T-shirt design for the Little Indians Color run!

We would also like to thank Mrs. Roxby for helping all the students create such wonderful designs.

Next PTA meeting is Tuesday Sept. 3rd at 7:00pm

Welcome kindergarten families and families new to the District!!!



MEDIA RELEASE FORM

2019-20 SCHOOL YEAR

Dear Parents/Guardians:

To recognize the great work of our students, we occasionally publish students' names, photographs and achievements in our school publications, yearbook, or post them on our web site. We might also videotape student performances and activities or release details about students' achievements to local newspapers, television, radio stations or the District website. We also use our elementary newsletter and The Contownian as additional avenues to communicate student accomplishments. This information may become available to the general public.

*If you prefer that we **do not** publicize your child's name, photograph, video image, or achievements, please let us know by completing this form. Please send the form back to the principal's office. If we do not receive a signed copy of this form, we will assume we have your permission to publicize this information.*

Alterations to this form WILL NOT be accepted/honored.

2019-20 Media Release Directive

StudentName: _____

Homeroom Teacher: _____

*I **do not** want my child's name, photograph, video image, and/or achievements disclosed in school publications, posted on the District's web site or released to the media.*

DATE

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

TELEPHONE NUMBER

**RETURN THIS FORM ONLY IF YOU DO NOT WANT
YOUR CHILD'S ACHIEVEMENTS PUBLICIZED.**

****Must be renewed annually****



HELP WANTED



The district is in need of Substitute Secretaries & Cafeteria workers.

These positions pay minimum wage and allow you to work with our own CT Indians.

For more information, please contact Lisa Stevens at 479-3702.