



DANBURY DIGEST

District News & Highlights

COMMUNITY RESOURCE PROGRAMS

Saturdays with Dr Sal- A Community Roundtable Discussion

Please join Dr Salvatore Pascarella, Danbury Public Schools' Superintendent for coffee and bagels on the following dates February 23, March 23, April 27, and June 1 at 10:00 am the Family Literacy Center, 49 Osborne St, Danbury. This is an informal gathering to discuss the upcoming budget and other general topics that parents may want to talk about.

Parents Supporting Educational Excellence (Parent SEE)-a free program for parents interesting in improving schools, and learning about federal, state and local mandates, key educational policies, how to read and improve your child's scores, and when to determine if improvements in schools are warranted. PSEE helps build your parent toolbox of effective parent leadership strategies in education. Classes begin Tues. Feb. 26, and runs for 13 weeks, from 5:30 - 8:30 pm at Ellsworth Ave School in Danbury. Dinner and child care are provided. For more information call 203-797-4734 or go to http://www.danbury.k12.ct.us/assets/Parent_See_Brochure2013.pdf.

Family Academy on Saturdays—designed to offer different seminars where children and families learn together. There is no cost for this program. Funding is provided from the 21st Century Learning Community Grant and the State Department of Education. Join us Saturday mornings from 9-10:30 at the Family Literacy Center at 49 Osborne St. in Danbury.

“Raising Readers”, beginning February 6, is a 6 week series of family workshops for parents and children. Families share a light snack then participate in activities that help them develop reading and literacy skills to share with children 3-7 years old. Each family receives a book each session to add to their home library. Program is free, thanks to a private donor through the Family County Community Foundation.

“School and Success” a 6 week class for parents helps parents to learn skills that are important such as creating a positive learning environment at home, planning a routine, learning through play, communicating the importance of school success with your child, using open-ended questions and showing understanding, and learn to strengthen your child skills in reading and writing, math, problem solving, homework and skill teaching.

There is no cost for this program. Funding from the 21st Century Learning Community Grant and the State Department of Education.

Superintendent's Message



In the wake of the tremendous tragedy in Newtown, we have spent the past few weeks analyzing our current school safety measures. With new information from this unfortunate tragedy, we are currently working to better improve our practices while also responding to parent and community concerns. We have held several meetings with our local law enforcement, mayor, and emergency personnel to discuss school procedures regarding student safety. The Danbury Board of Education also conducted a workshop for the public on school safety on Thursday, January 3rd, and plan to continue to discuss the concerns of the public and community at an upcoming board of education meeting. In addition, during the coming months school and city personnel will continue to meet and assess our school safety measures and conduct special drills. Our committee work will be guided by experts who will advise and make recommendations in order to implement proven best practices that will maximize safety on our campuses. Finally, an important aspect of prevention includes the social emotional support that we can provide to both student and staff alike. As such, I assure you this will also be part of our focus and improvement efforts.



PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS

Saturday Academy for Students K-8

A Program for Extending Learning for students' K - 8. Seminars include: scrap booking, building wooden figures, youth safety training, Let's Go Green, Introduction to Keyboarding, a trip to 4-H Educational Farm, Video production, Robotics, and cookie/cake decorating. This program provides opportunities for students to participate in extensions to classroom experiences that will strengthen students' skills. Classes are run on the second and fourth Saturday of the month at Danbury High School. More details in the brochure that was distributed the week of February 21.

SUNSATONAL SUMMER IS HERE! Stop Summer Learning Loss!!

The Danbury Public Schools' Premier Summer Program is here! In its 18th year, SunSational Summer provides your child with one of the most enjoyable summer experiences possible. The Enrichment Program offers your child(ren) the opportunity to learn while having fun. Some of our activities are Kids in the Kitchen, Microsoft Computer Club, Sports, Fitness, Girl Scouts, Boys Adventure Club, Science & Nature Club, Theater Arts, Kids Chorus, YMCA and Weekly Field Trips. Breakfast and lunch are provided by the Sodexo Lunch Program.

New this year is the O.W.L. Club (On With Learning) Academic tutoring in math and reading for an additional fee of \$25.00. Students work under the guidance of a certified teacher for 1 hour 4 times a week. O.W.L. staff will communicate with student's teachers to align the tutoring with the needs of the students.

We are now accepting registration for SunSational Summer at the ELP Office at 49 Osborne St. Danbury, CT SunSational Summer is open to students from Grades 1 -6 from the Danbury area for a weekly fee of \$150.00. A family registration fee of \$20.00 is charged at the time of the registration. Payment plans are available for family who need to take advantage of them. For those who register, Summer Blast Off Family Night will be held on Thursday, June 20th. For more information, please call the ELP Office at 203-797-4733. Registration for SunSational Summer ends June 7.

DISTRICT DATA SHOWS STEADY INCREASES



CAPT Scores at DHS have increased in math, science, reading and writing for our Hispanic, Special Education and economically disadvantaged students.

Proficiency increased for every subgroup in Reading and the percent of students scoring at goal or above increased for every subgroup in writing.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Danbury Public Schools is pleased to announce it has begun Kindergarten registration for children born in 2008 who will attending Kindergarten in Sept. 2013.

Due to centralization of Kindergarten registration, it is being held at the Educational Services Center at 49 Osborne St. in Danbury during the following hours:
Mondays & Fridays 12-3:30pm
Tuesdays 8:00 am-7:30 pm
Wednesdays & Thursdays 8-3:30 pm
Saturdays from 9-11:30 am

Parents need to bring the following documents with them to complete the registration process:

1) Two proofs of Danbury residency:

A current property tax bill, mortgage deed or notarized current lease rental

AND

A gas, electric or cable bill

2) The child's original full birth certificate with a seal on it

3) A completed CT blue Health form. A blank form can be provided at the time of registration.

Please contact us at 203-797-4734 with questions.



EVENTS & HAPPENINGS

Family University - Great Expectations “Together We Can Achieve More”

Danbury Public Schools’ 2nd Annual Family University Conference will take place at Rogers Park Middle School on Sat. March 23 from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Parents and children are invited to attend the conference. The conference features seminars for parents and children, child care, breakfast, lunch, and lots of free give gifts in our Resource Room. Parent seminars will be offered in English, Spanish and Portuguese. Topics include: “Mind in the Making,” “CyberSafety: Use of Social Media in the Home,” “My child came home and said.....what do I do now?”, Substance Abuse, Understanding your middle school age child, school safety, and Sodexo will present easy to make recipes and meals for families.

Children will be able to partake in the Touch Tank with horseshoe crabs and fish, work with the Traveling Teacher, be entertained by FOODPLAY for a special performance just for kids, arts and crafts, science, and gym fun.

Keynote Featuring FOODPLAY - The Emmy Award-winning live theater show features amazing feats of juggling, captivating characters, motivating messages, music, magic, & audience participation to turn children & students onto healthy eating & active lifestyles. An entertaining & captivating presentation!

Flyers will be sent home during the week of February 25.

Dawn Lafferty Hochsprung Fundraiser

Rogers Park Middle School Sunshine Club hosted their very first silent auction. This event was a fun event to celebrate the staff, and raise money for the Dawn Lafferty Hochsprung Memorial Fund. The scholarship will be given annually to one Naugatuck High School senior who is pursuing a career in education.

The event was held February 13 - 15. Some of the auction items included: Amare Stoudemire autographed NY Knicks Jersey, Darrelle Revis autographed NY Jets poster, Red Sox autographed Jersey and ball , Ski passes for Snow Mountain & Mohawk Mountain, Gift certificates to different restaurants in Danbury, Gift certificates to different Spa’s in Danbury, Foursome golf passes to Richter Park with two 30 min lessons.

This event was presented by the RPMS Sunshine Club, organized by Dana Peraz, Talia Monroy and Laura Muller. Through generous donations, they were able to raise over \$ 4,000. They thank everyone involved in making the event such a success.

For more information regarding the scholarship fund please visit the following website. (<https://www.wctfcu.com/News-and-Announcements/Dawn-Lafferty-Hochsprung-Memorial-Fund.aspx>)

Calendar

Friday Feb 15

PD - Early dismissal all schools

Monday Feb 18:

Presidents Day Schools & offices closed

Thursday March 21:

PD - Early dismissal DHS/ACE only

Thursday March 28:

PD - Early dismissal all schools

Friday March 29:

Good Friday Schools & offices closed

Thursday April 11:

PD - Early dismissal DHS/ACE only

Friday April 12:

PD - Early dismissal all schools

April 15 - April 19:

Spring Recess Schools closed

Thursday May 9:

PD - Early dismissal DHS/ACE only

Tuesday May 21:

PD - Early dismissal all schools

Friday May 24:

PD - All schools closed

Monday May 27:

Memorial Day Schools & offices closed

June 18, 19, 20, 21:

High School Exams

Early Dismissal DHS only

June 19:

Graduation

June 21:

Last day of school - Early dismissal

all schools



AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Kudos to **John Webber**, science teacher at **ACE**, who for many years now, has organized a community event on Thanksgiving morning to assist the homeless population in Danbury. Once again this year, he gathered donations from local restaurants to provide free food. He solicited others to donate coats, gloves, and other warm clothing to provide to those in need. Numerous volunteers and supporters were there as well, for the approximate 100 people that benefitted. His genuineness is what exemplifies what great teachers are all about! Hats off to John for giving back and making a true difference in the lives of others!

Broadview Middle School recognized students **Danielle Beirne**, an 8th grader, made the USA Dance Team and competed at the 2012 World Tap Dance Championships in Riesa, Germany at the beginning of December. She competed in a solo, duo, tri and small group number. Her solo came in 20th place, the duo in 15th place, the trio received a silver medal and the group won a gold medal. **Victoria Goncalves**, a 7th grader, competed in the Pan Am Games on November 23, 2012 in Mexico City, Mexico. She competed in the Judo Competition and won 3rd Place. Congratulations to both students on a job well done!

The **Danbury High School Robotics Team 5150** advised by teacher **Erik Savoyski** recently participated in their first two Connecticut Vex Robotic competitions held in South Windsor and Monroe. At the Connecticut Sack Attack Qualifier on October 27th, DHS took trophies in Excellence, Robot Skills, and Programming Skills. By winning Excellence, the highest award given at any Vex competition, the team qualifies to participate in the Vex Robotics World Championship to be held in Anaheim, California in April. Team members also participated in a robotics competition at the Festival of Lights sponsored by Ann's Place held at the Matrix on November 17th and 18th. The students displayed and entertained the crowd with both Lego and Vex robotic creations made by the DHS Honors Robotics class. At the Monroe/New Canaan Scrimmage on December 1st, the team was knocked out in the last round of the tournament semi-finals, and came in second in Robot Skills. Team members **Stephan Slabicky, Sean Inouye, Parviz Alum, Zaid Bhujwalla, Dan Kiselak, Tadeusz Wusik, Ian Knight, Konstantinos Fillipakos, Brett Schorr, Liam Raftery, Tim Williams, Emily Gardner, Amy McKinstry, and Rares Barbu** have been spending their after school hours plotting strategies, fine-tuning their autonomous programming, driver skills, and the robots themselves. The team is looking forward to competitions in Manchester, CT, Worcester, MA, and Central Connecticut State University in January and February, and the World Championships in April. This will be the third year in a row that Team 5150 will represent Danbury at the World event.

The newly created positions of Content Area Leaders are responsible to act as a liaison with Department Heads and Curriculum Administrators, or Directors, within their buildings for all grade levels, and between middle school. Additionally, they help to develop and revise district curricula, and set the agenda for and facilitate monthly department meetings. We look forward to working with these individuals to continue to improve communication and articulation between and among school buildings. Congratulations to the following teachers who applied for and were selected as Middle School Content Area Leaders: **Kristy Zaleta (science, RPMS), Sandra Solimene (science, BMS), Heather Stilson (math, RPMS), and Ken Seder (math, BMS), Sheila Stutsky (English, RPS), Lisa Kennedy (English, BMS), John Schlogl (social studies, RPS), Doug Mottola (social studies, BMS), Tracey Kurjiaka (reading, RP), and Vanessa Maldonado (reading, BMS).**



ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION NEWS

Adult Education – Register for **ABE, CDP and GED** programs. The next registration is March 6th and 7th, for classes that begin March 11. Call WERACE at (203) 797-4731 for more information.

ESL/English Classes are offered at no cost. The next registration session is January 8 and 9 for classes that run January 14 - April/May.

Visit our website, <https://sites.google.com/a/danbury.k12.ct.us/werace> or call 203-797-4731 with any questions.

GED Tests will be offered the following dates:
April 8, 9, 10, 2013 ; May 6, 7, 8, 2013; June 3, 4, 5, 2013. The current GED test will only be administered through December, 2013. Beginning in 2014, the test will be administered on line, and all previous scores will expire. Now is the time to complete the test. Call WERACE at (203) 797-4731 for more information.

Continuing Education – SAT Preparation and Drivers Education courses for High School students. SAT Prep classes will be offered on Tuesday and Thursday evenings starting March 11. Call WERACE at (203) 797-4731 for more information.



Drivers Education meets two days per week from 3:00-5:00 pm at Danbury High School. New classes start monthly. Class schedules rotate between Tues/Thurs and Mon/Wed sessions. Call All-Star Driver directly at (800) 732-8090 to register.

CITY WIDE PTO

On behalf of the City-Wide PTO board we would like to welcome back all of the students, teachers, and staff for a new and exciting school year. We would also like to thank the parents of all of our individual PTO's and PTO boards for the continued support for the children in our district. Please join us for a City-Wide PTO meeting. Our meetings are on the every first Monday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Beaver Brook Administrative Offices. You can also access our website at www.citywidepto.com. We look forward to a great school year !

Thank you, City Wide PTO Officers

Ralph Pietrafesa & Nancy Troll, Co-Presidents
Terri McCarthy, Secretary and Kim Council, Treasurer

Board of Education Meetings

- September 12 and 24
- October 10 and 24
- November 14 and 28
- December 5 - Annual
- January 9 and 23
- February 13 and 27
- March 13 and 27
- April 10 and 24
- May 8 and 22
- June 12 and 26

Board of Education Members

- Eileen W. Alberts
- Shirley Chilian,
Vice Chairperson
- Gladys Cooper
- Gary Falkenthal
- Annose Fluskey-Lattin
- Richard Hawley,
Secretary
- Richard Jannelli
- Kathleen Molinaro,
- Sandy Steichen
Chairperson
- Robert Taborsak
- Phyllis Tranzillo