



Dear Families,

Welcome to the 2022-23 school year! On behalf of the Board of Education, and our faculty and staff, we look forward to a year that reflects our CUFSD *student-centered, future-focused, and team-driven motto!* One component of team driven reflects our commitment to developing opportunities to collaborate with parents, families, and the community in support of student success.

COMMUNICATION & PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Establish partnerships that engage the community in an effort to enhance open communication and family involvement.

This year we are implementing the first **CUFSD Parent Advisory Panel** with the goal of creating a forum for discussion and input on various initiatives throughout the year. You will be receiving an invite to participate during the first week of school. Our hope is to have two parent representatives from each grade, Pre-K through grade 12. The team will meet as often as monthly, with a commitment of one year. Panel representatives will be willing to share their contact

information with their grade level families as a venue for questions to be posed and opinions represented.

Mrs. Dayanara Garcia, our new Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Communication, will be creating a **Family Instructional Academy**. This will offer workshops to families on topics relevant throughout the year or reflected as needed from our CUFSD Parent Advisory Panel. Our CES PTA and CA PTSA will be working collaboratively this year to drive parental involvement district-wide!

Our new CUFSD website will open during the month of September. We hope you will find the updated design improved, both in accessing important information as well as highlighting student achievement in all areas. Following the first month of the transition, we will invite parents to provide feedback and will update information throughout the year.

School Messenger will continue to be used to inform parents and families of upcoming events and essential information, including emergency closings. Registration for School Messenger is located under the Parents tab on our district website: www.chesterufsd.org. Please be sure your updated contact information is on file with your child’s school before registering.

SAFETY & SECURITY

Ensuring the safety & social emotional well-being of all students, faculty and staff.

Proactive vs Reactive Mindset

- Mental Health supports expanded through increased staffing
- SEL support programs in place for students (*Choose Love, PBIS, Safe School Ambassadors*)

Law enforcement and risk management expertise are involved in all facets of our safety protocols and procedures inclusive of a shared commitment to safety and security at all levels, standardized protocols and procedures, fidelity of implementation and ongoing evaluation and assessment targeting continuous improvement.

Local law enforcement, (*Chester Town and Village Police Departments*) Orange County Sheriff’s Office, New York State Police and the Orange-Ulster BOCES Health & Safety Risk Management Team.

We appreciate their efforts and continued involvement and support throughout the school year.

UPDATE ON COVID-19 PROTOCOLS: NYS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

MASKS / PHYSICAL DISTANCING	
Are masks required in school or on the bus?	No. Universal masking is no longer required. Masks are optional for all administrators, educators, staff, students, and visitors.
Is physical distancing required?	No, physical distancing is no longer required.
What happens when an individual tests positive for COVID-19?	Isolate for 5 days at home. May return after 5 days if: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Negative COVID-19 test or○ Fever-free for 24 hours/Symptoms improving Mask worn during days 6-10 while at school and on the bus.

ISOLATION	
What happens when an individual is diagnosed with COVID-19? <i>(PCR test or medical diagnosis for staff)</i>	Any student or staff member who is diagnosed with COVID-19 completes 5 days of isolation at home . Day 1 is the first full day <u>after</u> symptom onset. Individuals may return after 5 days if: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Negative COVID-19 test or○ Fever-free for 24 hours/Symptoms improving Mask is worn following return to school for days 6-10.
Are students offered remote instruction during isolation?	No. With the decrease in the period of isolation our belief is the time away from school should be focused on health and well-being. Students will have opportunities to make up missed work upon their return to school. Work may be sent home if requested. Academic support during instructional class time will be provided to the student upon return. In circumstances of a prolonged period of isolation or absence from school (medical documentation needed) alternate supports may be put in place.



CONTACT TRACING / TEST to STAY

Do schools still need to contact trace for positive COVID-19 cases?	No, contact tracing is no longer a part of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Department of Health (DOH) COVID-19 mitigation response.
Is Test to Stay (TTS) still a mitigation response?	No, the TTS program has been discontinued.
Are unvaccinated individuals required to test?	No. The New York State Department of Health no longer requires mandated weekly testing of unvaccinated staff.

WHEN TO STAY HOME

When is it suggested a student or staff member be sent home or stay home from school/work?	<p>Students and staff with symptoms of respiratory or gastrointestinal infections, such as new onset cough, fever, sore throat, vomiting or diarrhea should be sent home or directed to stay home. <i>This does not pertain to chronic issues under the care of a medical provider.</i></p> <p>Testing is recommended for people with symptoms of COVID-19 as soon as possible after symptoms begin.</p>
If sent home with COVID-like symptoms, when may an individual return to school?	<p>Individuals may return to school when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Negative COVID-19 test or○ Fever-free for 24 hours/Symptoms free

HOME TEST KITS

Does the school have COVID-19 home tests available for distribution?	Yes, anyone in need of a COVID-19 home test kit can call the Chester Elementary School or Chester Academy Main Office to make arrangements for pick up.
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Please contact our school health offices or your medical provider should you have any questions with regard to the DOH guidelines shared above.

CES School Nurse: Denise Rydell 845-469-2178 ext. 2209

CA School Nurse: Gina Straub 845-469-2231 ext. 3315

The CUFSD Administrative Team is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all students, faculty and staff reflective of our motto: student-centered, future-focused and team-driven in all that we do.

CUFSD ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Name	Position	Contact Information 845-469-2231 Extension
Ms. Catherine O’Hara	Superintendent of Schools	3401
Mrs. Rachel Loftus	Assistant Superintendent <i>Human Resources & Pupil Personnel Services</i>	3750
Mrs. Dayanara Garcia	Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Communication	3431
Mr. Edward Spence	Director of Technology & Data Management	3305
Mr. John Flanagan	Chester Academy Principal	3329
Mr. Rolando Aguilar	Chester Academy Assistant Principal	3304
Mrs. Mary Kate Boesch	Chester Elementary School Principal	2201
Mr. Erin Brennan	District Business Official	3408
Mr. Matt DeRosa	Director of Facilities & Safety Coordinator	3705

In an effort to support student success in all areas at Chester Academy, for the 2022-23 school year, Mr. Aguilar will continue exclusively in his role as Assistant Principal focused on all aspects of middle school and high school student expectations and culture.

Mr. Mel Wesenberg	Athletic Director	845-572-3035
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Chester teacher and previous coach, **Mr. Mel Wesenberg, is our new Athletic Director** for the 2022-23 school year. We are looking forward to the positive impact this transition will have on our academic, extracurricular and athletic programs for our students!

FACILITIES UPGRADES

Maintain and Improve the District’s Facilities in the most efficient and economical manner possible

We welcome our students, parents and families to visit the Chester Academy Gym to support our student athletes and view the improvements made over the summer. Thanks to the talent and dedication of our CES Art teacher, Emily Daunicht, we have our Chester Logo newly painted, front and center! This was a collaborative effort supported by our District Facilities Team, and John Siecinski from our Technology Department.

Continuing the updates showcasing Chester pride, Athletic Director Mel Wesenberg and Director of Physical Education Mike Doucette have been working to update all sports banners in recognition of the amazing accomplishments of our Chester student athletes and their coaches. We expect this project to be completed by the end of September.





Our facilities team has been extremely busy over the summer in preparation for the new school year inclusive of preparing for construction on our future Chester Academy Makerspace! We thank our Chester Librarian Carolyn DiIorio, Library Clerk, Eve Pawelski and Tech & STEM teachers Jeff Rodman and Ben Heyer for their efforts in moving the CA Library and Engineering Design classrooms in preparation for this creative and innovative space for our students.

When visiting our Chester Elementary School, you will quickly take note of the changes to both the entrance as well as the interior lobby. We also thank our Chester Elementary School PTA parents for their efforts in the transformation of the faculty room. What a special way to welcome our teachers and staff back to school!

There have been many other upgrades throughout the district, including more efficient lighting installed at Chester Elementary School as well as new ceiling tiles replaced in key areas throughout the building. Additional security cameras have also been installed district-wide.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

Foster learning experience that provide a foundation for college and career readiness inclusive of communication, collaboration, creativity and innovation, creating confident lifelong learners.

This year, we are transitioning from the previous K-8 assessment of NWEA MAPS to the i-Ready assessment and individualized instructional support program. I-Ready is a research-based K-8 program that begins with an assessment to determine each student's academic skills in math and reading. The assessment will be given at the beginning, middle and end of the school year in an effort to target the instructional needs of our K-8 students while also measuring progress and growth throughout the year.

In support of New York Next Generation learning standards students will be introduced to the i-Ready Classroom Mathematics program in grades K-5. We are also expanding the Foundations® program to second grade this year. CES Students will continue to use our state-of-the-art Makerspace both for engineering design challenges as well as robotics, and new this year, green screen technology. Our Middle School has added a Media Arts class, while High School students now have the opportunity to take Sports Media, Dance, Exercise Science, Product Research & Development and Transportation Engineering.

We continue to value critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication throughout the student learning experience PK-12 and invite any parents or community members to share their expertise, linking learning to real-world applications. We will be sending information out in the first week of school if you are interested in partnering with us!

I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to support our students, faculty, staff, parents, families, and Chester community members working together to impact positive change. I look forward to seeing you on the first day of school, Tuesday, September 6th, and wish you and yours all the best for a happy, healthy and successful school year!

Sincerely,

Catherine O'Hara

CUFSD Superintendent of Schools

845-469-5052 ext. 3401