

ELLICOTTVILLE

D I S T R I C T • N E W S L E T T E R

Volume 51, Issue 2

In Memory of Mrs. Adams

ECS Community Funds Purchase of Memorial Bench



The ECS community raised funds to purchase a new bench and matching waste receptacle for the Elementary foyer in memory of Cathy Adams. Mrs. Adams was the secretary in the elementary office from 1999-2020. She lost her battle with cancer in December 2019. Pictured on the new bench are Cathy's grandchildren Maddie and Braden Winship.



NYS Scholastic Challenge Champ!

Back in early 2020, sixteen sixth graders took part in an online competition which involved individually answering 100 questions about different topics. Due to the shutdown, we have just recently received the results. Jackson Kruszynski is the 2020 Sixth Grade New York State Scholastic Challenge champion! Congratulations!

IMPORTANT DATES:

Wednesday, November 11, 2020
Closed for Veteran's Day

Wednesday, November 18, 2020
Will switch to a "On-Campus A Day" for MS/HS Cohort 2

Thursday, November 19, 2020
Parent / Teacher Conferences
(1/2 day for students)

Students arriving at 8 will be dismissed at 11
Students arriving at 9 will be dismissed at 12
"Bag" lunches will be sent home with all students
This will be a "flex" day in MS/HS
Teachers will contact parents for conference times

Tuesday, November 24, 2020
(1/2 day for students)

"On-Campus A Day" AM Only for MS/HS Cohort 2
Students arriving at 8 will be dismissed at 11
Students arriving at 9 will be dismissed at 12
"Bag" lunches will be sent home with all students

Wednesday, November 25, 2020 to Sunday, November 29, 2020
Thanksgiving Break – No School

Monday, December 14
"On-Campus B Day" for MS/HS Cohort 1

Tuesday, December 22
Will switch to "On-Campus B Day" for MS/HS Cohort 2

Wednesday, December 23 to Sunday, January 3, 2021
Winter Recess – No School

Monday, January 4, 2021
School Resumes

Monday, January 18, 2021
Martin Luther King Jr. Day – No School

Friday, January 29, 2021
Rating Day – No School for students



Superintendent's Message...Making Progress!

Before going any farther. **THANK YOU** for all that you have done to assist with ECS reopening this fall.

- Thank you for your patience and support. Opening under the shadow of COVID-19 has required everyone to adapt. Your patience as we opened with different schedules, transportation process, cafeteria arrangements, remote learning plans, etc. has been and is greatly appreciated!

- Thank you for your confidence and trust.

- Thank you for being flexible when we have needed to change processes or procedures.

- Thank you for the suggestions that have been sent our way. While we could not implement all of them, there are many that we were able to incorporate into our work.

- Thank you for keeping an open mind as we have tried new things.

- Thank you for understanding that a number of the measures we have had to take or follow this year were required by the New York State Education Dept. (NYSED) and or the New York State Department of Health (DOH).

- Thank you for your generosity (this will be addressed more in a separate article in this newsletter).

- Thank you for guiding your children on the proper use of PPE. I am impressed how the students have worn masks every day without incident!

- Thank you for your anticipated and continued cooperation as we move forward.

As I write this article, it's hard to believe, but we are in our 8th week of school! The way the entire ECS Community has pulled together has been nothing short of amazing! As a team (and that includes students and parents) we have worked hard to adhere to safety measures so that we can stay open. From the time the students board the bus or enter the building until arrival at home after school, safety is our number one priority. As we move forward, I would like to be able to guarantee everyone that we will be able to be open every day until June 25, 2021. However, I cannot make that guarantee; COVID-19 has a way of interfering with plans. What I can

guarantee is that we will be open as much as possible **and** only when it is safe.

As the year progresses, there may be a need to close for one or more reasons. We may have to close one day or circumstances may require us to close for several days. While there are many factors that will come into play, including guidance from the DOH, I would like to offer a few examples:

- **Example 1:** An individual at the school tests positive. Depending on when that individual last attended the school will play into the decision to close and for how long. If it is a student that attends on Thursday and Friday and the DOH determines that the student contracted COVID-19 over the previous weekend and has not been in contact with anyone at the school, we may not have to close.

- **Example 2:** An individual at the school tests positive and we learn of the results on a Thursday. We may have to only close for 1 day (Friday) as the DOH will be time to conduct contact tracing and clear us to reopen on the following Monday. Students would work remotely on such days.

- **Example 3:** Due to contact tracing it is determined that a significant number of staff members have to quarantine. Regardless of the number of positive cases (and it may only be one case), the school may not be able to remain open as it simply will not be able to find enough substitutes (teachers, bus drivers, custodial staff, etc.). In this scenario, we may have to move to an all remote learning model for an extended period of time due to quarantine orders.

- **Example 4:** We are ordered to close for in-person instruction for 14 days by New York State because we are in a "red" or "orange" zone.

These examples represent just four scenarios; the number of possible scenarios is indeed larger. Each case will have to be examined independently before final decisions are made. And, these decisions will not be made in a vacuum. The decisions will be made in conjunction with medical professionals and the Department of Health, AND can include factors such as local trends; the decision to switch to remote learning or remain open may not be a District decision.

We also have a long ways to go this year overall. We are learning every day. We are trying to refine our use of different computer programs and apps. This is proving to be a little more cumbersome than we anticipated, as some programs are geared more towards business as opposed to education. There is also a learning curve with some of the programs / apps, and we do not want to push students too quickly on this. A gradual transition will be of more benefit to students. We also do not have any final answers on possible reductions in New York State Aid. While the State withheld 20% of our anticipated payments in July and August, they did not do so in September. We are still waiting to see what will happen with October's Aid payments. In the meantime, we will have balance the need to buy only necessary items, as if even 10% overall is not distributed, we will lose a great deal of funding.

Now, on to some more positive news...

- It has been such a joy to see students back at the school!!!! While we cannot see the smiles behind the masks, we can see the excitement in students' eyes. They are glad to be back in the learning environment with the friends.

- We are currently trying to plan a 2020-21 Yearbook! We are not 100% sure this will be logistically possible, but we are starting to work on one. It will look different as there will be fewer opportunities for pictures, and, therefore, most likely, be smaller than in year's past. On the other hand, it will truly be a unique edition and will forever capture this "crazy" year.

I would suggest that you keep an eye out for more information. We hope that 20 years or more from now students will be able to share this with their children and talk about how the COVID-19 Pandemic changed their year at school!

- Speaking of pictures, this year "school pictures" will be taken on December 14th and 17th. More information will be sent home with students and posted on the District website / Facebook page.

- Some student activities such as Quiz Bowl are going to be offered via a virtual format. This will allow students to compete against other schools without having to leave their house!

Continued on next page...

Making Progress Continued...

• Varsity, JV and Modified Soccer are all underway! It sure is great to see students on the field of competition once again. We are still waiting for word on winter sports, but have our fingers crossed.

• We are not 100% sure what Ski Club will look like this year, but we anticipate having this in some form. Stay tuned for more information.

• 6th graders will soon (if not already) be issued laptops to use this year. This means all students in grade 6-12 will each be issued a school computer for the year!

• Please see the separate article in this newsletter regarding iPads for elementary students / families.

I'm energized by the promise that this year holds for the students of ECS! Yes, it will look different. We will not be able to offer everything that we always have, but we are open! Students are attending school in-person. Students are playing sports and we are slowly looking for more opportunities for students. As always, working together, as a team, we will strive to provide the best for the students!



Go Eagles!

Bob
Bob

ECS Welcomes New Employees



Ms. Anna Fortais (Music) Ms. Anna Fortais is joining ECS as the new music and chorus teacher. She is from Syracuse, New York and she attended SUNY Fredonia, where she received both Bachelor and Master degrees in Music Education. One interesting thing about Ms. Fortais is that she is also a violinist! Ms. Fortais is excited to start the new school year at ECS and is looking forward to getting to know all of the students, parents and teachers!



Ms. Fortais

Ms. Lisa Pawlowski (Science) Ms. Lisa Pawlowski is joining us as a middle school science teacher. Lisa has taught science for 15 years, most recently at Franklinville Central School. She attended SUNY Cobleskill and then went on to receive a Master of Science degree in Agriculture and Extension Education from Penn State University. Lisa lives in Great Valley with her partner Greg and their three-year-old son, Preston. She is a graduate of ECS, as well as a former high school science teacher in the district. Lisa is excited to be returning in a new role.



Ms. Pawlowski

Additional New Employees Include:

- **Todd Lovell** (Transportation Supervisor)
- **Marcie Rust** (Teacher Aide)
- **LaDonna Freundsuh** (Long-term substitute, remote learning)
- **Reann Ehman** (Long-term substitute, elementary)
- **Luke Campbell** (Cleaner)
- **Austin Lewis** (Cleaner)
- **Nick Delity** (Cleaner)
- **Jody Maynard** (Cafeteria Worker)
- **Nick Fedick** (Cleaner)
- **Janet O'Rourke** (LPN)

Personal Finance Wish Granted!

Last Fall, Mrs. Cathie Nason approached the Administration with the idea to make the personal finance course a graduation requirement for all students of ECS. The course was currently being offered as an elective and also for Jamestown Community College credit, however it is an important course for all students to have. The idea was then taken to the Board of Education who unanimously approved it. Mrs. Nason began working with NGPF (Next Gen Personal Finance) whose "mission is to revolutionize the teaching of personal finance in all schools in order to improve the financial lives of the next generation of Americans." She utilized their free curriculum, professional development, and gold standard challenge which offers \$2 million in grants to spur adoption of new personal finance graduation requirements.

This summer Mrs. Nason received an email that congratulated her on winning a \$10,000 grant for ECS to use with their new personal finance graduation requirement! The money will be used to enhance the curriculum through technology, field trips, etc. This year's freshman class of 2023 will be the first class to have this graduation requirement. The course will cover topics such as: behavioral finance, taxes, checking and savings accounts, paying for college, types of credit, managing credit, investing, insurance, and budgeting.

ECS is only the second school in New York State (first public school) to receive this grant!





SKI CLUB

The Ellicottville Ski Club for the 2020-2021 season is a go! Though the district is unclear if the Ski Club will function the same, specifically regarding transportation, all district students will continue to receive the same fantastic discount that Holiday Valley offers to support the local ski culture. Additionally, there are other changes. High School English Teacher, Joe Steger, has assumed the title of Ski Club Advisor after long-time head, Glenn Hall, retired last year. Another change is that all registration will now be online.

More information and directions will be forthcoming regarding this new process. While going paperless, Holiday Valley has ensured that it will be a smooth transition. Watch for additional information regarding registration that should be coming soon.

We are looking forward to a great ski season and LET IT SNOW!!!



ECS Community Pulls Together

While COVID-19 continues to present challenges to school and students across the country; communities all over are finding ways to provide assistance. The news is regularly featuring stories of how a group or organization has pitched in to help.

I'm proud to say that the Ellicottville Community has not only heard this need for help, it has exceeded expectations! I've always known that this community is a strong family, but, recently, I was reminded just how especially strong it is.

Earlier this summer, schools did not really have a clear direction of what would be allowed. Would we be told to open remotely? Would we be allowed to reopen with in-person instruction? What programs and activities would be allowed? There were just so many unknowns, and we did not receive true final guidance on what we could offer until the end of the 1st week in August.

When we found out that we could open for in-person instruction, we immediately started making plans to provide the safest environment we could for students. This meant buying lots of PPE, purchasing Desk Guards to maximize student attendance in the elementary and ensuring extra funding for double bus runs.

While we are excited about the ability to open in-person; especially at the elementary level, we also need to be mindful of the fact that we may be forced to move to remote instruction for a period of time during the year. With this in mind, it was important to start planning. All of the students in grades 6-12 already have been or will be issued a laptop, so they would each have exclusive use of a technology device. We also have a small number of iPads that have been issued to elementary students on remote instruction as needed / requested.

What we did not have is the ability to issue at least one iPad to every elementary family to be used in the event we have to switch to all remote instruction. This is where the Ellicottville Community jumped in to help, and help they did!

After reviewing and juggling funds within the District budget, it was determined that we could purchase 45 new iPads. Unfortunately, when combined with the current 88 school iPads, we were still short our goal of 195 iPads (the amount needed to provide one device per family). Through the efforts of several organizations and individuals, funds were provided to purchase the remaining 62 iPads! We can't thank these groups enough on behalf of the students and the District.

The Rotary Club of Ellicottville and Sean Cornelius worked with the following groups, organizations and individuals to secure \$13,230:

- The Rotary Club of Ellicottville
- EBD Inc.
- The Weed Ross Agency
- The Boardroom Snowboard Shop
- Travis and Darlene Baugh
- New York Central Mutual Insurance

The Cassetta Funds, managed by Tony Cassetta, donated \$6,000.

The Wolfinger Family through the Cattaraugus Region Community Foundation donated \$1,000.

The iPads to be purchased with these funds have been ordered. When they arrive, they will be utilized in classrooms so that students become accustomed to them. In the event that we have to transition to all remote instruction, these iPads will then be distributed to families to use at home. These iPads will also be distributed to students that may be participating in remote instruction who are required to quarantine.

This outpouring of generosity is so greatly appreciated! Again, on behalf of the students' of ECS, **THANK YOU!**

THANK YOU!



Department of Health

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

HOWARD A. ZUCKER, M.D., J.D.
Commissioner

LISA PINO, M.A., J.D.
Executive Deputy Commissioner

IMPORTANT NEWS FOR SCHOOLS AND CHILD-CARE FACILITIES

Each year, to comply with New York State Public Health Law (PHL) § 613, licensed and registered day care programs, nursery schools, pre-K, kindergarten, school-age child care programs, and public and non-public schools are required to post information about influenza (flu) and the benefits of flu vaccination at the start of flu season in early fall. This year, flu vaccination is more important than ever because the flu and the virus that causes COVID-19 may both be spreading. Flu vaccination will help reduce the spread of flu and help ease the burden on our health care system.

Information must be posted starting now in “plain view” in your facility where visitors can easily see it. If school is still being conducted remotely in fall 2020, the information should be posted electronically and/or e-mailed or mailed to families of all students. To help you comply with this requirement we’re sending the publication, ***Parents: Fight Flu at Home and School***. It is geared to parents and guardians and explains why flu is serious, provides signs and symptoms of the disease, and recommends annual flu vaccination to protect children from flu. Feel free to print and post this publication. It is available, along with other flu information, for free and in multiple languages here:

- The New York State Department of Health
www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/influenza/seasonal/child_care_and_schools/

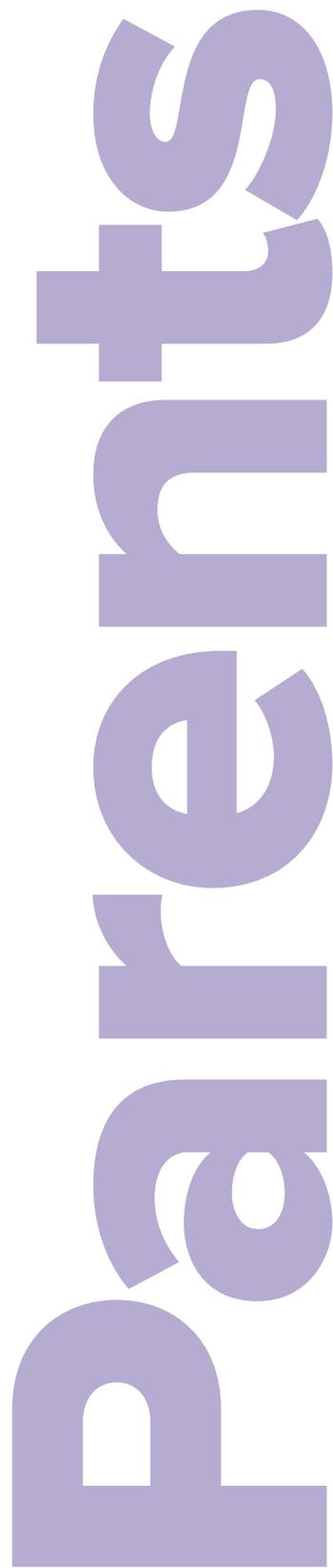
Additional free materials about flu and flu vaccination are also available from the organizations listed below. Please feel free to choose information from these sites if you prefer:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/flu/resource-center/freeresources/print/index.htm
- Information specific to New York City Schools is available through the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene here:
www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/flu-seasonal.page

The flu vaccine is the best way to prevent flu. It is recommended for everyone 6 months of age and older every year. Getting vaccinated can prevent flu-related hospitalizations and deaths in children. The vaccine can also reduce flu illnesses, doctor’s visits, and missed work and school days.

If you have questions about complying with PHL § 613, please feel free to contact the State Health Department’s Bureau of Immunization at immunize@health.ny.gov or call (518) 473-4437.

Thank you for helping educate families about flu and the importance of flu vaccination.



Fight Flu at Home and School

Flu, or influenza, spreads easily and can make people very sick, especially kids. You can help stop flu!

Flu symptoms include:

Fever or chills, body aches, cough, sore throat, headache, runny or stuffy nose, feeling very tired. Some people, especially children, may have stomach problems and diarrhea. Unlike a cold, the flu comes on very suddenly.

Prevent flu!

- Flu vaccine is the best protection against the flu. It is recommended every year for everyone 6 months and older.
- Get the flu vaccine for you and your children every year! It helps make flu sickness milder or prevents it all together.
- Getting the vaccine early in the fall means you and your children will be protected when flu season starts.
- Ask people close to your children, like babysitters and relatives, to get the vaccine, too.
- The vaccine is especially important for people with certain health conditions, like asthma, diabetes, heart or lung conditions because the flu can make them even sicker.

If your child gets the flu:

- Your child will need plenty of rest and lots of fluids.
- Keep your child home from school for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone without using fever-control medicine. This helps avoid giving the flu to others.
- Talk with your child's health care provider before giving a child any over-the-counter medicine.
- Never give your child or teenager aspirin or any medicine that has aspirin in it. Aspirin can cause serious problems.
- If your child gets flu symptoms and is younger than 5 or has a medical condition like asthma, diabetes, or heart or lung disease, call their health care provider. Young children and those with certain medical conditions are at greater risk for getting seriously ill from the flu. Ask their health care provider if they recommend an antiviral drug.
- If you are worried about your child, call their health care provider.

Don't spread flu!

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water aren't handy, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow, not your hands. Put used tissues in the trash.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. That's how germs spread.
- Stay away from people who are sick.

health.ny.gov/flu



Department
of Health

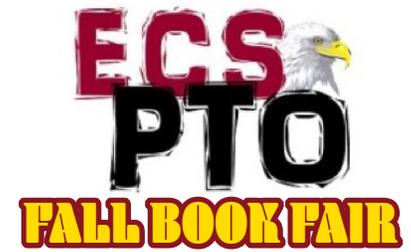
Obtaining Digital Equity



The New York State Education Department has recently reached out to all districts across the State to once again complete a survey about students' access to digital devices and the internet. While the District has previously collected much of this information, we may need to reach out to some families to fill in the gaps of information. Please be patient with us if a staff member calls you to ask some questions.

At the same time, one of the questions that is being asked has to do with internet access at each families' house. According to our last two surveys and based on your responses, roughly 30% of the families' in the District do not have reliable internet access. Some families have indicated that while they do not internet access, they do have reliable cell phone service. This is good and may allow for some limited connectivity. The concern is, while a couple of "bars" for signal strength may work fine for texting, e-mails, etc., we cannot be sure that the signal will be strong enough for video streaming, downloading of larger files, etc.

I have reached out to elected officials at the State and County Level and would encourage you to do the same. More importantly, if you do not have internet access, I would you say it might be beneficial for you to call the cable providers that are nearest to you, and you may have to call more than once. The hope is that we can generate enough "noise" to be heard in Albany or to convince a cable provider that it would be financially beneficial to them to start connecting houses in a given area. I'm bringing this up, because NYSED has stated that among other things, "...schools should seek to provide students and teachers, for use in their places of residence, with access, to the extent practicable, to ...consistent, reliable access to high-speed internet at a sufficient level to fully participate in remote/online learning..." This is not truly practicable for many schools. Aside from enormous costs to Districts, we cannot force the cable companies make the connections and hotspots only work if you have a good cell phone signal. And, even if there is a signal, it may good for AT&T but not Verizon, so the District would have to consider contracts with multiple companies. We need to collectively send the message that in today's age, not having internet access is unacceptable and we need help making it available to everyone.



The ECS PTO will be hosting
a **Virtual Book Fair**

When? Oct. 26th–Nov. 8th

Where? Online!

Visit: www.scholastic.com/bf/ellcottvillecentralschool

What? Shop over 6,000 products including award-winning books, best sellers, boxed sets, and much more!

★All orders ship home.

★Free Shipping on (book-only) orders over \$25.

★Earn rewards for our school!

Important Information from the Guidance Office

SAT DATES:

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>
December 5th	November 7th
March 13th	February 12th
May 8th	April 8th

Register for the SAT at:

www.collegeboard.org

The test fee is \$52 Fee waivers are available to those who qualify

ACT DATES:

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>
December 12th	November 6th
February 6th	January 8th
April 17th	March 12th

Register for the ACT at:

www.actstudent.org

The test fee is \$55.00 Fee waivers are available to those who qualify.

FAFSA:

The FAFSA is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. All college bound seniors should apply for this! The application is currently available at www.fafsa.ed.gov

When completing the FAFSA you will need your 2018 tax return information. You and your son/daughter will also need to file for a FAFSA I.D. This unique I.D. is what you will use to electronically sign the FAFSA form. Once the FAFSA is completed you will receive a Student Aid Report from each college that you applied to. This report will include information about student loans, grants and scholarships that you may be eligible for. It will also include your family's EFC(expected family contribution), how much you will have to pay out of pocket for that college.

SCHOLARSHIPS:

Seniors, please check your school e-mail on a regular basis. All scholarship information will be sent to you via e-mail.

COLLEGE APPLICATIONS:

Seniors, there are two main portals to complete college applications. One is the SUNY app, this applies for all State Colleges and Universities in NYS. You can use this one application to apply to multiple SUNY schools. Remember, even though there is one application, each college has it's own fee to apply. www.suny.edu

If you are applying to private colleges and universities as well as SUNY schools, you can use the Common App. This site also allows you to apply to multiple colleges using one application. www.commonapp.org

Be sure to check application deadlines when applying!

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Mr. Robert Miller, Superintendent
Mr. Erich Ploetz, 7-12 Principal
Mrs. Maren Bush, Elementary Principal / Director of Curriculum

