



# GATES CHILI

## CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Fall Newsletter 2019

## Around the world, back in time in one class period

From the top of the Great Wall of China, to as far back as the Stone Age, Gates Chili students are exploring the world today and long ago with the help of virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR).

This is the second school year that Gates Chili students are using Google Expeditions, with the help of Innovation Coaches Mike Munski and Chris Amesbury. The duo of teachers on special assignments are helping to facilitate lessons that explore history, science, the arts and the natural world using 3D immersion technology.

"VR and AR are bringing to life the subjects students have learned about in text books," said Munski. "This allows for a truly immersive experience."

The cardboard VR viewers utilize iPods to allow students to explore 360-degree scenes and 3D objects, interesting sites and time periods.

**"In social studies, we focus on ancient civilizations. VR brings those regions to the classroom and we are able to feel like we were there."**

- Stacy Kanaley, social studies teacher

Gates Chili students have gone back in time to learn about the Great Depression, explored geography of many countries around the world, discovered an underwater ecosystem and even traveled to ancient Egypt.

"Students are able to tour the world up close and see parts of history," said Stacy Kanaley, sixth-grade social studies teacher at Gates Chili Middle School. "In social studies, we focus on ancient civilizations. VR brings those regions to the classroom and we are able to feel like we were there."

During and after the field trips, teachers lead students in planned activities giving students a chance to share their learning.

Middle school students are not the only ones utilizing this tool. Gates Chili kindergartners have visited virtual farms and high school students have used the headsets to visit the Holocaust Museum and various earth science landforms.

For Munski, this exciting new way to deliver content has him reenergized. He said, "The best part of these virtual reality experiences are when we transition to a new scene and the students collectively 'oooh and ahhh' when discovering the 3D environment of the tour. We are always on the lookout for better tools to enhance the student experiences taking place in the classroom."



*Together we teach and inspire excellence for all learners.*

## Letter from the Superintendent



Dear Gates Chili Community,

It is hard to believe that we are nearing the end of the first marking period. It has been a very busy start. In addition to

exciting capital project milestones, we celebrated Gates Chili Hall of Fame inductees, welcomed back alumni during Homecoming and added more than 100 new members to our outstanding Gates Chili faculty and staff. Our district is thrilled to continue the journey of educational excellence.

I want to begin by thanking our administrative, custodial, clerical and transportation staff for preparing our buildings and buses for another school year. I also want to thank the teachers, teacher aides and administrators for making the start of school a special one for all of our students. Our district is ready to create more success stories in our community.

At each school, we will carry on our tradition of academic, art, music and athletic excellence, while looking for new opportunities to grow and provide each child with the best experience in every aspect of their education. We have established three main goals for this year. **By June of 2020, the Gates Chili Central School District will increase personal and academic success for all learners through:**

- engaging of staff in targeted professional development opportunities that build their capacity to support student-centered learning.
- developing an understanding of culturally-responsive practices to cultivate the power of relationships and foster meaningful connections with students, families, and the community.
- improving student cohorts by 2% on the graduation rate, NYS Regents Exams, Grades 3-8 ELA, Math and Science Assessments and Grades 1-2 students reading on grade level

Students in classrooms today need to learn different skills than generations that came before them in order to succeed in the new economy. Gates Chili CSD is committed to meeting the challenge of defining these skills and incorporating them into our curriculum. We have provided extensive resources to our faculty and staff to implement technology into our classrooms and I believe that it will improve our students' educational experience.

Our faculty, staff and administrators are committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment that is a great place for all to work, learn and grow. We thank you for sharing your students with us.

Go Spartans!

Christopher J. Dailey  
Superintendent of Schools.



## Join the GCCSD Team!

Employment opportunities are available including instructional and non-instructional positions.

For more information, visit  
[gateschili.org/hr](http://gateschili.org/hr)

## See something? Say something!

Gates Chili CSD is introducing the Safe School Helpline®, a convenient, confidential way for anyone to report information about situations that might affect safety.

You can call the number 24/7 to report concerns about unsafe or potentially disruptive activities or situations including drug or alcohol abuse, weapons, harassment, bullying or threats.

### To report:

**Call: 1-800-418-6423 ext. 359**

**Text: TIPS to 66746**

**Visit: [safeschoolhelpline.com](http://safeschoolhelpline.com)**

# Capital Project Update

As the weather begins to turn cooler, parts of the Gates Chili CSD Capital Project are heating up.

Gates Chili Middle School has seen the most significant amount of work since school started in September. Teachers are in temporary classrooms as work progresses throughout the building. Crews demolished science classrooms to allow mechanical, electrical and plumbing rough-in work to advance. Foundations for the reconstructed core area of the building are in place and ready for the next stage of construction. The space once occupied by a pool has now progressed, containing temporary classrooms and a set of bathrooms. Students and staff are already using these areas. The space housing temporary classrooms will be finalized in later phases.

Across the street at Gates Chili High School, Spartan Stadium is officially open. The scoreboards and sound system were up and running in time to cut the ribbon on the stadium in mid-September. Student-athletes have been taking advantage of the fall weather to bring home several victories on the new turf field. Meanwhile, seeding of the grass field is complete and crews are putting the finishing touches on the track. The phase of the project involving the high school auditorium is currently out to bid. That phase is expected to begin construction in January 2020.

At the elementary level, work is winding down at Paul Road and Florence Brasser Elementary Schools. New kindergarten classrooms and new playgrounds are currently in use by students. Both buildings have new fire alarm systems in place and crews are finishing up additional security modifications.

Meanwhile work at Walt Disney and Neil Armstrong elementary schools, is scheduled to begin in the spring. Contractors will have the opportunity to bid on those phases of the project this month.

The entire project is scheduled to be completed in fall 2021. The latest developments can always be found on the Gates Chili website at [gateschili.org/capitalproject](http://gateschili.org/capitalproject).



## Introducing the Gates Chili Special Education Parent Teacher Organization (SEPTO)

### ***A new support group for families, staff and community members***

SEPTO will work collaboratively with the home, school, and larger community to provide education, support and connections for students with different abilities.

Help determine programming by taking a short survey  
[gateschili.org/septo](http://gateschili.org/septo)



**Questions?**

Email: [GatesChiliSEPTO@gmail.com](mailto:GatesChiliSEPTO@gmail.com) • Facebook: Gates Chili SEPTO

## Pumpkins and Panthers and Spartans, oh my!

Paul Road Elementary School participated in its third annual Panther Pumpkin Run on Oct. 3. The run has grown in participants each year, with 200 students taking part this year, and the Spartan mascot in attendance. Each Panther walked away with a free pumpkin as they crossed the finish line on the new playground. Paul Road also hosted its book fair, adding more fun to an already exciting event.



## Brasser celebrates like *superheroes*

Each year, Red Ribbon Week is celebrated in schools across the nation to promote a drug-free America. This year at Florence Brasser, students celebrated Red Ribbon Week with the theme “Responsibility is my super power!” Throughout the week, students dressed up as their favorite superheroes and focused on the importance of making healthy choices for their bodies and minds.



## Honoring a memory with *kindness*

Students and staff at Neil Armstrong and Walt Disney elementary schools are carrying on Fireman Joe Manuse's legacy of kindness and caring. The compassion he demonstrated continues with a new initiative called Acts of Kindness. Staff members at both schools have been working together to help students organize kindness baskets which will be hand delivered to local firefighters every month.

The baskets filled with small projects, treats, trinkets, messages and pictures, are created by the students at each school. The first basket was delivered to Gates Fire Station No. 2, where Fireman Joe volunteered his time. It featured kind messages for first responders from fifth-graders at Neil Armstrong. Lt. Stephen Sears and his crew accepted the first basket, overwhelmed with the compassion the Armstrong Stars shared with them.

"Joe touched so many lives, so many hearts," shared Sears. "By having the students in Gates Chili as part of our family, a support mechanism to help us get through day-by-day, it's really touching. The handwritten notes especially hit home."

Disney Dragons are also putting together kindness baskets, with plans to deliver to fire stations in the community throughout the school year.



## *Curtains up* on a new season of ARTS Partners



Gates Chili students are gearing up for another thrilling season of theater thanks to a nationally-recognized program.

ARTS Partners, which stands for Arts Reaching and Teaching in School, is a partnership between GCCSD and the Rochester Broadway Theatre League (RBTL). It gives children a chance to explore the arts through interactive lessons, before experiencing the show in-person. Throughout the year, teachers integrate arts into their curriculum, using themes related to touring Broadway shows. This year, the exciting lineup of shows include "The Lion King," "Come From Away," "Anastasia,"

"Cats" and "Dear Evan Hansen."

Nearly every elementary classroom and the entire middle school are participating, with more than 1,200 Gates Chili students, staff and parents planning to attend "The Lion King" and about 500 going to see "Come From Away."

A variety of activities are already happening in school buildings, with even more planned as the shows get closer. At Neil Armstrong and Walt Disney, students are creating and hanging art pieces. At Paul Road, students held a theme day on Halloween centered on "The Lion King." Meanwhile, fourth- and sixth-graders have started a pay-it-forward/kindness challenge with



themes from the musical "Come From Away" and the legacy of Fireman Joe Manuse.

GCCSD was awarded the 2019 Magna Award for equity in education by the National School Boards Association (NSBA). In the first three years of the program, more than 70% of Gates Chili students received arts integrated curriculum as a result of the program, with almost 65% of those students attending a live performance.



## Sisterhood, unity and *respect* with SAVVY

Approximately 30 girls, ranging in age and background, packed into the chorus room of Gates Chili High School. While most of them had never met before, they would soon find ways in which they are all connected. Though the after-school group is not about music, it does focus on harmony; the harmony of race, gender and social issues. This all-girl group is named SAVVY and is led by School Psychologist Dr. Stacy Killings.

SAVVY's mission is simple: build a sisterhood within the high school. Part of that mission means focusing on fostering respect for one another, developing leadership skills and creating a sense of unity. Senior Nazzaih Cheeks joined SAVVY when she was in 10th grade. She explained that these bonds are not superficial. For the girls, SAVVY is a place to form friendships and understanding.

"We don't talk about our hair and nails. We discuss real issues going on," said



Cheeks. "Race, unequal representation of males and females in society. It's not just for girls of color, it's for all females."

Junior Alayna Delice added, "We do touch on topics of race, sexuality. We're being given a safe place to discuss those topics."

"Let's focus on things we have in common, our similarities," Dr. Killings said, as she led the group through its first exercise. "Too often girls judge and look at each other as a competition, at our differences."

Throughout the school year, the group will hear from strong female voices as speakers and will do a variety of activities around the school building. Dr. Killings aims to bring SAVVY on a field trip once a month, focusing on female empowerment.

"Everybody hears about famous, important female figures who have things to say. As a student it makes it important to hear that, to see it locally," shared Delice.

Veteran members of SAVVY cited that local connection as a major reason to join the club, adding that they get an experience through SAVVY they can't get anywhere else.



## Spartan Circle connects middle schoolers to mentors

Spartan Circle is a unique collaboration underway in the Gates Chili community. It aims to match middle school students with role models; including our own high school students and adult role models in our area.

This year, Spartan Circle is pairing up with the Town of Gates Recreation and Parks Department. This will create a safe and structured environment for students to meet with their peers and connect with encouraging adults from the community.

While the program's roots began as a mentoring program, it has since shifted to be more active and informal to make it open to more students. It centers around monthly events at the Gates Rec Center on Buffalo Road, but also includes community activities. In the past, events have included Amerks and Red Wings games, martial arts and sports career nights, game nights and service projects.

Just as GCCSD prides itself on being a united community, so do the towns surrounding our campus. In a collaboration with local organizations, Spartan Circle provides the meeting point between the two.

"Our ultimate goal is to help students build relationships within their community. Many of our adult volunteers are alumni who want to support and give back to the school by supporting current students.

"This year we are having high school students volunteer so they can give back to help middle school students grow their community and be better supported," shared Costa Tavelaris, Gates Chili Middle School assistant principal. He explained those efforts complete the circle of supporting and strengthening the entire community.



English ▼



Latin ▼

## Gates Chili students win certamen

Gates Chili students in grades 8-11 celebrated a Latin “triumphi” over 11 other schools at an academic competition on Oct. 19.

The contest, called Certamen, is set up much like “Jeopardy!” complete with buzzers and a need for quick thinking. Students competed according to their level of study in a test of mastery in Latin grammar, mythology, history, culture, vocabulary and derivatives.

Five students walked away victorious with first place achievements: George Kirk (grade 8); Tate Finger, Michael Lin, Evan Schmidt (grade 9); and Spencer Anderson (grade 10).

Congratulations to all the students who competed.



## GC PRIDE Award

Gates Chili CSD is proud to recognize students, staff and community members who go above and beyond on behalf of the district and its students. The GC PRIDE Award stands for and honors professionalism, respect, innovation, dedication and excellence. Congratulations to the all of the recipients for September and October.



Katie Davis,  
Paul Road Family  
Association President



Emma Gardner,  
Gates Chili High School Senior



Raymond Guentner,  
Community Member



Francis Muscato, Board of  
Education Member and  
District Historian



Peter Sacheli, Math Content Leader,  
Walt Disney Elementary School



Angela Stout, Walt Disney  
Parent Teacher Organization  
Co-President



## Building a *CHAMPIONSHIP CULTURE*

This year, for the first time ever, student-athletes at the modified level are getting a taste of what it feels like to play a varsity sport. Thanks to the capital project upgrades and a new turf field, modified teams are taking turns practicing and playing at Spartan Stadium.

“A key component to building a championship culture is access for all student-athletes,” said Patrick Irving, Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics. “It is our hope that exposing our youngest student athletes to Spartan Stadium will motivate them and their families to continue participating in our programs and help build Gates Chili pride.”

Students like modified soccer athletes Megan Maslowski and Brienna Bigelow have both been playing soccer since they were toddlers, and were excited for the opportunity to play under the lights.

“It’s really awesome to get to represent our school,” said Bigelow. “Sports is a huge part of my life and I feel like this is helping prepare us for JV and varsity.”

Maslowski added, “We grew up watching older girls play and tonight the stands were full of people there to watch us play. It was a really great feeling.”

Search the hashtag #BuildingAChampionshipCulture for a look at how our Gates Chili student-athletes and staff are building a championship culture every day.



## Unified athletes take their lanes

Sporting their new uniforms and taking their lanes, Gates Chili student-athletes came together to form the first-ever Gates Chili Unified Bowling team.

Students played in a Unified bowling match on Oct. 29 against Brockport. Between the sound of pins clanging, you could hear cheers and high-fives between players and fans. The scene reflected the reason Unified Sports are growing throughout the country. The inclusive sports program unites Special Olympic athletes with teammates for training and competition.

Gates Chili Central School District is one of approximately 16 schools in Section V now offering unified bowling.



## A new Spartan among us

You may have noticed a new Spartan popping up at campus and athletic events. Our new mascot made his debut on the first day of school. We are so excited to welcome this newest Spartan to our ranks. Gates Chili physical education classes have been busy brainstorming names for him and we want your input too! Go to [gateschili.org/mascot](http://gateschili.org/mascot) to submit ideas.



# A new approach to *professional learning*

Gates Chili CSD is utilizing a new tool to aid teachers in their professional development, and teachers don't have to go far to benefit from it.

"Although before- and after-school in-services play an important role in developing the capacity of our teachers, it doesn't work for everybody," said Florence Brasser Assistant Principal Meghan Bello. "We began to look at the different ways that we could tap into the desire to build instructional capacity but do so during the workday. That's when the idea of Learning Labs came to be."

Learning Labs are a new form of professional learning available to teachers in the district. This job-embedded professional development for teachers, by teachers, fosters collaborative communities. It gives educators the opportunity to continue to learn from one another and develop shared practices.

The process is setup in four stages: a pre-visit meeting between a host and guest teacher; a classroom visit where guest teachers can see a class in action; a post-visit meeting, which can provide time for reflection and discussion; and finally, outcomes or closure, where the guest teacher can take what they have learned back to their own classroom.

After piloting the program last school year, staff took part in Learning Labs at various grade levels throughout the district's elementary, middle and high



**“ Learning Labs are meant to build relationships within the colleagues and the teachers that are going to be a part of it, It'll be an ongoing way for teachers to collaborate and improve the student learning that's happening in the classroom. ”**

- Chris Amesbury, innovation coach

schools on Oct. 16 and 23. Although these first two experiences gave many staff opportunity for growth, Learning Labs aren't meant to be a one-and-done experience.

"Learning Labs are meant to build relationships between the colleagues and the teachers that are going to be a part of it," said Chris Amesbury, innovation coach. "It'll be an ongoing way for teachers to collaborate and improve the student learning that's happening in the classroom."

Tara Roberts, a second-grade teacher at Paul Road, visited Jen Christensen's fourth-grade classroom at Florence Brasser on Oct. 23. During the visit,

Roberts watched Christensen facilitate an inquiry-based learning activity. Students worked on a lesson about the Haudenosaunee people, then shared claims about what they noticed with their peers through a discussion thread on Schoology. Roberts said the lesson inspired her to try something new.

"I was able to experience students using technology in meaningful ways for learning and collaboration," said Roberts. "I feel motivated to try some new strategies in my own classroom."

So far, seven host teachers and 10 guest teachers have taken part in Learning Labs. Learning Labs will continue this spring, with new host and guest teachers. The district hopes to offer this professional development framework to include other initiatives beyond instructional technology.



# Fall Family Fest a great *Success*

More than 300 people crowded the Gates Chili High School Field House on Nov. 7 for the district's annual wellness fair. The event, which was centered on promoting healthy habits and robust school-family-community relationships, was aptly named Fall Family Fest: Harvesting Health and Wellness in Our Community.

Adults and children in attendance took part in games, crafts, photo booths, a bounce house, demonstrations, blood pressure checks and more. Nurses were busy dispensing flu vaccinations and the Spartan Eats bus was on site doling out healthy treats. Thank you to our many community partners who donated time, services and door prizes to promote wellness in our community.



## Staff Spotlight



**Andrew  
Dorofy**

**Network Technician  
Technology Hub**

Playing video games as a child led Andy Dorofy on an unexpected career path to Gates Chili CSD. You can often find the network technician between the walls of hard drives and tech equipment of the technology hub. There, he spends countless hours taking apart computers and refiguring gear in order to provide Gates Chili digital citizens with the tools they need.

Those skills came from his own time in high school, when he would figure out how to fix his personal computer equipment. He was self-taught, never considering a degree in his hobby.

An internship at his alma mater shifted that direction.

"I worked with a lot of teachers I had, it made the job that much more exciting," Dorofy said. "When I was a student, you would notice all the locked doors, places you couldn't go. All those doors locked, I can get in them now. I can see the behind-the-scenes stuff, a different experience than when I was in high school."

Seven years ago, he brought his talents to Gates Chili Central School District as an employee.

"Andy is an asset to our technology department and Gates Chili," said Director of Technology Troy Olin. "He provides outstanding support to our students and staff and is always ready to take on a challenge."

"There's just a strong sense of community here. When you go to every

building, talk to every teacher, you can tell no matter which building or department they work in, they're united," Dorofy said.

Not only did Dorofy find a fulfilling career at Gates Chili, he also met his wife. Lisa Dorofy, also part of the GCCSD family, teaches English at Gates Chili Middle School. The two met his first week on the job, but it would be some time until their first date. Now they have been married nearly three years and are expecting their second daughter.





# February 2020

**Tear this updated calendar page out and add to your calendar/handbook for easy reference!**  
For the most up-to-date events, times and locations, visit the online calendar at [gateschili.org](http://gateschili.org) or download the Gates Chili mobile app.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>March 2020</b> S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31						BOE Study Session, 12 p.m. <b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	PR Family Association Mtg., 7 p.m. HS Music Boosters Mtg., 7-8 p.m.	<b>4</b>	MS SIT Mtg., 3-4 p.m. FB Family Association Mtg., 6:30 p.m.	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b>	MS Kindness Week FB Jump Rope for Heart Week	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	MS Grade 6 Social, 7-8:30 p.m.	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
	<b>Presidents' Day</b> <i>District Closed</i>		<b>Mid-Winter Recess</b> <i>No School for Students and Teachers</i>			
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
		NA K Registration, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. BOE Mtg., 7 p.m.	College Wear Wednesday NA K Registration, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.	FB K Registration, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. NA PTO Mtg., 6:30-7:30 p.m.	 FB K Registration, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. <b>#GCPride Day</b>	



## GATES CHILI CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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*Designed and printed at Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES*



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Gates Chili Schools

## **December**

3	Board of Education Study Session - Closed to Public	6 p.m.	Admin Building
3	Disney Winter Choral Concert	7 p.m.	WD
4	High School Winter Band Concert	7 p.m.	HS
5	Grades UPK-5 Parent Teacher Conferences	5-8 p.m.	
5	Grade 6 Winter Band Concert	7 p.m.	HS
9	Grades UPK-5 Parent Teacher Conferences - No School UPK-5		
10	Board of Education Meeting	7 p.m.	FB
11	Paul Road Winter Band and Chorus Concert	6:30 p.m.	PR
12	Grades 7-8 Winter Band Concert	7 p.m.	HS
13	#GCPride Day		
16	High School Holiday Choral Concert	7 p.m.	HS
17	Grades 6-8 Winter Choral Concert	6:30 p.m.	HS
18	Disney Winter Band Concert	7 p.m.	WD
20	Grades UPK-5 Student Half Day		
23-Jan 3 Holiday Recess, No School			

## **January**

1	<b>New Year's Day - District Closed</b>		
7	Board of Education Study Session	6 p.m.	Admin Building
10	Grades 7-8 Social	7-8:30 p.m.	MS
14	High School/Middle School Jazz and Percussion Concert	7 p.m.	HS
14	Board of Education Meeting	7 p.m.	Admin Building
16	Armstrong Winter Band and Chorus Concert	7 p.m.	NA
17	Brasser Family Swim Night	6:30-8:30 p.m.	HS
20	<b>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - District Closed</b>		
21-24	Regents Exams		
22	Brasser Winter Band and Chorus Concert	6:30 p.m.	FB
24	<b>Superintendent's Conference Day - No School for Students</b>		
28	Board of Education Meeting	7 p.m.	Admin Building
31	<b>#GCPride Day</b>		
31	High School Java Jazz	6-9 p.m.	HS