

A Cultural Exchange

Carlynton High School students enrolled in French and Spanish classes had the opportunity to spend time in different countries this past summer. The cultural exchange gave teenagers the chance to travel, encounter a wider range of people, broaden their vocabulary, and become immersed in rewarding sightseeing experiences.

For eight days in June, French teacher **Billie Vaslavsky** accompanied five French students and several parent chaperones to Paris, France. The excursion took them on walking tours to see major monuments, castles and abbeys. The group visited Chenonceau and Amboise, castles in the Loire Valley, and the impressive, 1,000-year-old Mont St. Michel abbey. The trip coincided with the country's 75th anniversary celebration of D Day, giving way to some history about World War II and a tour of the American cemetery in Normandy, the beaches in Normandy, and the Museum of the Arromanches. The travelers also had the chance to take a French cooking class in a culinary school.

Junior **Abigail McClain**, who felt fortunate to travel with her twin sister **Amanda** and their father, said the history



When in France, a visit to the Eiffel Tower is a must. The group of students and chaperones from Carlynton discovered much about the culture and history of France during an eight-day visit.

of the country made the most impact. "Seeing the modern mixed with the old buildings and having the chance to see how people live in France gave me a chance to compare my lifestyle to theirs," she said. Because the visit overlapped with the anniversary celebration of the invasion of Normandy, Abigail said the group was able to



The travelers used small motorized boats to explore the narrow canals of Tortuguero National Park, seeing all sorts of creatures native to the country.

view countless exhibits that related to that period of history as well.

Students enrolled in **Steven Vayanos'** Spanish courses in grades 10, 11 and 12 were afforded the chance to travel to Costa Rica for 10 days in late June. The "coast to coast" journey took 25 teens and three chaperones from the Caribbean Sea on the eastern coast of Central America through San Jose to the Pacific Ocean on the west coast. From the country's capital, the students traveled to Tortuguero, a remote area in the jungle near Nicaragua. Taking small motorized boats down the narrow canals of the Tortuguero National Park, the travelers saw sloths, howler monkeys, toucans, and even tarantulas.

Traveling west to the town of La Fortuna, teens swam in a river and along the banks of 200-foot waterfall with friendly spider monkeys at their side. They had the chance to visit the active Arenal Volcano, spending the night in cabins near its base as howler monkeys called out to one other and scurried across the cabin rooftops.

The trip concluded near the west coast town of Carrillo and included many oceanfront activities along the Pacific. All who traveled through the country agreed it was an experience they won't soon forget.

The chance to participate in a cultural exchange tends to combine the best parts of travel and sightseeing by allowing peers to gain a broader knowledge of the country they visit. Having the opportunity to gain fluency and conversation skills in a second language while traveling is the perfect reward to an experience shared with friends.



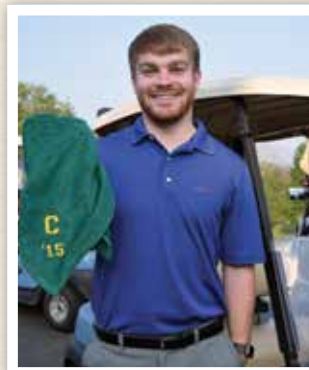
Spanish students gathered around a sign for a photo after arriving in Costa Rica with high expectations for adventure.

Education Foundation Enriches Learning

Empowering excellence and cultivating character for all students is the mission of the Carlynton Education Foundation. The non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) corporation was established in 2015 to enhance the educational opportunities for all school district children by providing support to academics, projects, and initiatives beyond the scope of standard school funding.

The education foundation is led by a diligent group of individuals who strive to raise funding to academically enrich the lives of students. High school teacher **Lisa Rowley** is president of the board of directors. She is joined by teachers **Laura Begg, Bethany Martys, and Wendy Steiner**, and parents/residents **Palma Darenkamp, Isabel Ford, David Robb, Lu Ryan, and Peggy Sembrat**. Annually, the organization holds a golf outing, a purse bingo, a prom fashion bash, and the popular "Taste of Carlynton," held in the spring at Chartiers Country Club and featuring the best tastes from menus of local restaurants, bakeries, ice cream and candy shops.

In the last four years, the foundation has awarded over \$121,500 to support student enrichment. Teachers can apply for a classroom mini-grant up to \$500.00. Applications are reviewed and grants are awarded on a rolling basis. The funding has supported a variety of classroom initiatives such as alternative seating, solar-powered calculators, wall maps, mini libraries, sensory equipment,



Carlynton alumni Ted Ford joined friends at the Carlynton Education Foundation golf outing held in October at the Shadow Lakes Golf Club in Aliquippa. All golfers received a cloth backpack with several goodies including a golf towel embroidered by students in The Shop. The towels of alumni included the date they graduated from Carlynton.

technology equipment, software, and robots, and the purchase and refurbishing of musical instruments.

The foundation has also been active by purchasing items for The Shop at the junior-senior high school, for STEAM projects in the elementary schools, and other special projects within the district totaling in excess of \$16,000. In addition, scholarships are awarded at the end of the school year to graduates planning to matriculate in a post-secondary learning institution.

More information about the Carlynton Education Foundation can be found on its website at www.carlynton.org/home. Those interested in actively serving with the foundation or making a tax-deductible gift to the Carlynton Education Foundation, can contact Lisa Rowley at lisa.rowley@carlynton.k12.pa.us or call 412.429.2500, ext. 2912.

School Newspaper is Live! Students write from a first-hand perspective

The high school Cougar Times school newspaper has gone live this year. Students, under the leadership of teacher **Rachel Enck**, are using a blog platform to present ongoing news and updates of sporting events, field trips, and other activities. The articles have been enlightening, with individuals sharing their perspective and first-hand experience.

The student-run blog is giving readers the opportunity to discover more about school happenings and is also providing digital links to listen to music composed and produced by students, podcasts, and one-to-one interviews.

In late September, seventh grader **Uzochi Orji** posted a story on the blog about her experience at the recently-attended eco-challenge. Rather than re-telling her account, she has granted permission to reprint the well-written article:



Uzochi Orji

The Eco-Challenge at the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens By Uzochi Orji

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the percentage of environmental scientists and ecologists is steadily growing. Part of the reason could easily be the increasing number of botanical gardens around the world and the number of activities for children inside of them. Carlynton School District is lucky to have a garden less than 20 minutes from its community. Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens was constructed in 1893 as a gift to the city of Pittsburgh. Including this year, and five years' prior, our local conservatory has hosted a middle school and high school event called the Eco-Challenge. This educational event teaches of the different works and wonders an environmental scientist can do to make real and positive change in the world. This year approximately 25 students in grades 6, 7, and 8 in the Gifted and Enrichment program attended the Eco Challenge at Phipps on September 12, 2019.

Next to Phipps is a school-sized building powered entirely by solar power. In that

building the Carlynton students interviewed different ecologists and environmental scientists and saw the different roles that can be carried out through these various careers. Next, the students explored the garden, where they participated in a scavenger hunt to find different plant types. This amazing garden is home to hundreds of endemic Cuban plants and thousands more from other ecosystems. The only reason this astounding array of plant diversity could be brought to our city is because of the hardworking scientists here and in surrounding communities.

Once the Carlynton students completed the activities for the day at Phipps, they were offered another set of challenges to become involved in, which is an extension of the Eco-Challenge. These challenges are collectively named the Fairchild Challenge, and it consists of challenges that demonstrate the impact kids can have on the environment. The Fairchild Challenge proposes a variety of hands-on ways to create sustainability in our environment. A series of different challenges run throughout the remainder of the school year, with specific due dates. The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners earn \$500 for their school! So cheer on the Cougars who were lucky enough to tour and learn about the many ways that we can support, care for, and sustain our precious environment.

Making a Connection

Educators Learn New Teaching Practices to Impart in the Classroom

Teaching is one of the most underrated professions out there. Yet, teachers provide a vital education to today's youth and play a crucial role in developing the minds of future journalists, doctors, plumbers, engineers, or computer programmers.

Carlynton School District educators will tell you that teaching is way more than just "teaching." If that sounds ambiguous, think of it this way: having the ability to connect with students and make them receptive to listening, learning, and understanding a subject isn't for the faint-hearted.

So how does an educator acquire the skills to be successful? Many will tell you it takes practice, patience, preparation, and passion to mold students into becoming leaders of tomorrow. One aspect of preparation is continuous training and coursework. More often than not, teachers will give up some or part of their summers to "go to school" to discover new and innovative practices to capture the attention of their students.

This past spring, high school business education teacher **Ryan Gevaudan** took a course from the Education Technology of American College of Education to gain a deeper perspective of online training. Gevaudan sees online courses as a vehicle to enhance learning. "With technology taking over every aspect of our lives, this experience afforded me the opportunity to gain a better understanding of what is on the horizon for our students and possibly the future of many advanced degrees," he said. In the classroom, Gevaudan uses a blended approach to education. With technology, students are breaking down the walls of the classroom and accessing information, anytime and from anywhere.

Carnegie Elementary fifth grade teacher **Scott Donnelly** attended the Colonial Williamsburg Teacher Institute in June for a program called, "Apprenticeships, STEM, and Colonial Life." Through a hands-on, project-based learning approach, Donnelly and other participants engaged with trade masters and investigated scientific principles by using simple machines to cause chemical reactions. The training also incorporated engineering using local sources, guiding him to develop dynamic lesson plans for his classes. In one activity, Donnelly stomped barefoot in clay to condition it for brick making. In another, he used an old Gutenberg-style printing press to produce a leaflet. Donnelly says he intends to apply some of the 18th century "technology" in his STEM and social studies classes, allowing students to gain an understanding of the scientific theories used in daily life in the Colonial era.

Biology teacher **Bill Palonis** traveled to Kansas City, Missouri in June, joining 534 AP Biology teachers and college faculty across the U.S. to score over 260,000 global AP exams. By evaluating and scoring the exams, Palonis was able to understand the approach used for test questions and scoring rubrics. Palonis said the process allowed him to adjust his teaching methods and will help students develop the reading and writing skills necessary to successfully answer biology questions on the exam. Mr. Palonis also participated in the Biology College Board Open Forum



Carnegie Elementary fifth grade teacher **Scott Donnelly** uses a drawknife to trim a board while attending a workshop in Colonial Williamsburg.

meeting, interacting with members of the College Board and the Educational Testing Service teams who design and write the AP Biology exams. The meeting, he said, gave him the chance to inform the test writers about topics and course changes, aligned with Pennsylvania curriculum standards.

Later in the summer, Mr. Palonis spent four days in Harrisburg. Working alongside committee members of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, he assisted in the process of writing questions for the future Biology Keystone Exams. The opportunity provided insight to the types of questions and terminology that will be used on the exam, and will enable him to better prepare students when the biology exam becomes a requirement.

As an extension to a Holocaust studies course, high school teacher **Tim Patsko** was invited to attend five days of intensive training at the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh. The eight-hours-a-day instruction included "The Holocaust from a Local Perspective" featuring presentations and interaction with local Holocaust survivors and other resources. Professors from Penn State University, Troy University (in Alabama), and the University of South Carolina led the training with an emphasis on integrating technology into Holocaust studies, anti-Semitism issues, and teaching strategies for the classroom. The course was aligned with the expansion of Act 70, a bill signed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education prioritizing Holocaust and genocide instruction in all schools in the Commonwealth. As a result, Penn State will be among the first universities to offer a degree program in Holocaust Studies. Last summer, Mr. Patsko traveled to Washington, D.C. for training at the National Holocaust Museum.

Crafton Elementary Principal **Marsha Burleson** and teacher **Amy Rynn** traveled to Monterey Bay, California to attend The Digital Promise Challenge Institute. Crafton Elementary has been

selected as part of a digital co-hort for the 2019-2020 school year. The school joins 10 elementary schools in the region by leveraging connections and engagement in maker learning with a goal of amplifying its impact on student achievement. In an effort to enhance lessons for students, Burleson and Rynn addressed the shift from project-based learning (PBL) to service-based learning (SBL) to gain a more global perspective by promoting sustainability and equity within the school community. The training from the challenge institute has already been introduced and shared with educators in the building and students are taking these lessons to a new level.



Social studies teacher Rachel Foltz stands behind the Lincoln statue located outside of the Gettysburg National Military Park Museum.

High school social studies teacher **Rachel Foltz** was selected to participate in a professional development opportunity at Montpelier, the home of former President James Madison, located in Virginia. Joining other secondary teachers from Pennsylvania and Dr. Jason Jividen, an Associate Professor of Political Science from St. Vincent College, the three-day colloquium provided the opportunity to discuss primary source documents relating to the writing of the United States Constitution. The group also toured Montpelier and the exhibit "The Mere Distinction of Colour," which honors the lives of the enslaved who worked on the Madison plantation. The exhibit examines the influence of slavery on the founding of our country. Foltz also traveled to Gettysburg and Philadelphia in the summer to tour historic locations linked to the Civil War and the American Founding. "These experiences will help me to incorporate more primary sources into my teaching," Mrs. Foltz said. "Through the study of primary source texts, I hope my students develop a more in-depth understanding of past events by examining history as a series of human events," she added.

As part of the district's ongoing partnership with the Fluency Project at Carnegie Mellon University, high school teachers

Kristen Fischer and Wendy Steiner were invited to participate in a film titled "HundreED" to spotlight educational initiatives in the Pittsburgh region. In the video, Fischer and Steiner discussed the benefits students are seeing by using Finch Robots, designed in the CreateLab at CMU by Birdbrain Technologies. The Finch Robot is designed to engage students of all ages and abilities through coding projects that can be integrated into everyday lessons. Students across the district are using the Finch Bots and Steiner has witnessed creativity as individuals learn at their own pace. Fischer and Steiner's involvement in the Fluency Project has triggered invitations to speak at local and national symposiums. In March, the pair traveled to Atlantic City, New Jersey to share District initiatives in computer science and STEAM resources with educators at the Mid-Atlantic Professional Development Conference.

Some teachers devoted part of the summer break to volunteering in the community. High school English teacher **Tonilyn Jackson** and her licensed therapy dog, Virginia Woof, spent Tuesdays mornings at the Carnegie Free Library reading to young children. Jackson said the interaction between children and her pet was heartwarming and it also gave her the chance to convey her love for books with youngsters.



Mrs. Foltz captured a photo of a mosaic, part of the slavery exhibit at Montpelier. The artwork is a portrait of an enslaved brick maker. It was created from fragments of bricks found on the plantation.



Tonilyn Jackson and pet Virginia Woof, pictured with children at the Carnegie Free Library, enjoyed reading to youngsters at the library.

There is a knack to discovering approaches to connect with students and make them receptive to learning. Because of its size, educators in the district are approachable and available to students to strengthen that connection. When teachers learn, students learn, attaining an education that will take them beyond the walls of a school building and prepare them for the future.

Note: Teachers attending or invited to the professional development trainings mentioned in this article did so at no expense to the district.

HOMECOMING 2019



Adventures in Wonderland was the theme for the 2019 homecoming celebration. The festivities began with spirit week and were capped by a morning pep rally Friday, October 4 in the high school auditorium. A dance-off and a puzzle-solving contest between teachers and the homecoming court prompted laughing and cheering followed by a more formal introduction of the 10 members of the court: **Nick Cindrich, Erin Fox, Jada Lee, Makayla Linn, Dakota Mayfield, Dallas Paolino, Ainsley Pearce, Mark Phillips, Maggie Reigle, and Evan Staker.**

Later that evening, Washington Avenue in Carnegie was lined with folks, young and old, as they applauded the marching band, student organizations, and fire trucks that paraded down the center of the street. Riding in the back of convertibles and pickup trucks, members of the court waved to crowd.

During pregame of the Cougar football game at Honus Wagner Field, the king and queen and their court were introduced to fans, parents, and relatives, adding to the excitement of the evening. At halftime, the court took centerfield for the much-anticipated announcement. **Dallas Paolino and Maggie Reigle** were decreed the 2019 homecoming king and queen.

The following night, 200 students gathered at the high school for a semi-formal dance. Guests walked through a dark, mysterious rabbit hole to gain entrance to the gym. The room was carefully cloaked in special lighting, chandeliers, decks of cards, and butterflies to convey a scene from "Wonderland." Tables were covered in dark linens with crafty centerpieces and a buffet offered an array of sumptuous finger foods. It wasn't long before everyone was on their feet, dancing and swaying to music, spun by a deejay.

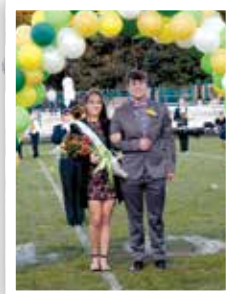
The annual fall celebration of homecoming is viewed as a time to welcome the return of alumni. For students, the social event provides a shot of school spirit and a memory-in-the-making by celebrating and appreciating shared experiences among friends.

This page, clockwise from top left:

- Members of the 2019 homecoming court (front L-R) Mark Phillips, Jada Lee, Dakota Mayfield, and Makayla Linn; (back, L-R) Nicholas Cindrich, Maggie Reigle, Evan Staker, Ainsley Pearce, Dallas Paolino, and Erin Fox. Photo by Anya Carrasco
- The Cougar marching band, led by drum major Kyle Auth, marched down Washington Avenue during the homecoming parade.
- Court members Makayla Linn and Dakota Mayfield rode in the parade on the back of a convertible.
- Members of the senior class crammed into the bed of a pickup truck to flaunt school pride as they rode in the parade.
- Erin Fox was escorted in the parade by junior Dequay Canton who stood in for his friend and court member, Dallas Paolino. As a leader on the football team, Dallas was not able to participate in the parade.



STUDENTS CELEBRATE A FESTIVE AND SPIRITED ADVENTURE IN WONDERLAND



This page, top photos, clockwise from left:

- Homecoming night was a "pink out" to honor breast cancer victims and survivors. Fans wore pink and cheered for the cougars by making noise with green clapper sticks donated by the Carlynton Federation of Teachers.
- Homecoming court members Jada Lee and Mark Phillips stood under an arch of balloons as they were introduced to the crowd in the bleachers.
- Ainsley Pearce and Evan Staker were presented to fans during pregame ceremonies of the evening's football game.
- Members of the 2019 Homecoming Court stand at centerfield.



Middle, photos from left:

- Maggie Reigle, escorted by Nick Cindrich, stands in shock as her name was announced as the 2019 homecoming queen.
- As his name was announced as homecoming king, Dallas Paolino received a happy a hug and a shout out from escorts Erin Fox and Dequay Canton.
- Armed and ready to coronate the king and queen were seniors Elizabeth Duffy, Savannah Sevacko, and Abigail Lherbier.



Bottom, photos from left:

- Carlynton High School 2019 homecoming queen Maggie Reigle and king Dallas Paolino.
- The well-attended homecoming dance was held in the beautifully transformed high school gym.
- Students danced through the evening to music by a deejay and the backdrop of special effects and lighting.

Cougar Connection

PROMOTING COMMUNITY, EXCELLENCE, AND CHARACTER

▲ GOALS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

What happens when nearly 100 teenagers from 13 area high schools gather in a room for a rumbling of the minds? You have a Youthquake! In September, Carlynton High School freshmen, sophomores, and juniors **Georgie Gamble, Gwen Kalimon, Natali Lutsiv, Ethan O'Brien, Lukas Prepelka, Audrey Robb, Simon Schriver, and Evan Walker** joined other high school teens to take part in think-tank mission, joining the City of Pittsburgh, local universities, and businesses in a quest to meet 17 United Nation (UN) Sustainability Development Goals.

The meeting, sponsored by Covestro, was held in the Energy Innovation Center in the city's Hill District. The company appealed to teens for their youthful energy to generate ideas, focusing on environmental, economic, and social sustainability outlined in the UN Sustainability Goals and examining techniques to apply them locally.

Pittsburgh follows New York City as the second city in the nation to incorporate a sustainability plan based upon the 17 key UN goals. Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto believes the goals will provide a framework to hold the city accountable

and will make Pittsburgh better for future generations.

The Youthquake event was organized in collaboration with the Consortium for Public Education, which serves as a bridge between Pittsburgh's business and education communities. A wide range of speakers addressed students before teens from all school districts were partnered with businesses. Together, they have been challenged to research and engineer solutions to design, build, and test prototypes.

The development of sustainability goals embraces a Project-Based Learning (PBL) initiative where students will learn by doing. Working collaboratively over an extended period of time, the teams of students will engage, investigate and resolve to overcome the task set forth before them. The teams will formally present their solutions later this winter before community and business leaders.

▲ DISTRICT PURCHASES STUDENT TRANSPORT VAN

In May, the Carlynton School District Board of Education voted to approve the purchase of a 10-passenger van. A 2019 Ford Transit-150 XL was ordered from Woltz and Wind Ford through the Pennsylvania Department of General Services Costars



Athletic Director Nate Milsom and Business Manager Chris Juzwick are excited for the opportunities a recently purchased 10-passenger van will offer students.

bidding program at a cost of \$31,050. The van will be used to transport small groups of students to extracurricular activities and athletic events.

As mandated costs within the district continue to rise to an all-time high, administrators were challenged to develop money-saving strategies in order to maintain programs and activities for students. One area of concern was the cost of transportation to particular student events. Often, a full-sized bus was used to take a handful of students to a math competition, a district band festival, or a state track meet.

Athletic Director **Nathan Milsom** championed the proposal to purchase a vehicle. Working with the business department, Milsom calculated the costs the district spent in the past year for bussing 9 or fewer students to athletic contests. The audit revealed and validated the savings the district would realize by purchasing its own van. By replacing buses, the vehicle could be paid in full within two years of purchase.

To safeguard and protect students who will ride in the van, the board adopted Policy 810.3,* School Vehicle Drivers, to provide a series of guidelines and requirements for all drivers. Only qualified, licensed adults employed by the district will be permitted to drive the vehicle for school-related events.

The van will be outfitted with the school district logo and lettering to indicate that students are onboard. The purchase will facilitate and preserve student experiences and allow for additional extracurricular opportunities that may have been discontinued due to cost. Consequently, the district is reducing costs and students will reap the benefit of partaking in activities they enjoy.

*Policy 810.3 can be found on the district website by visiting www.carlynton.k12.pa.us/board_of_education/policy_manual.



Students from Carlynton are partnering with Pittsburgh business leaders to develop sustainability goals for the City of Pittsburgh based on the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.

▲ GUESTS OF HONOR

What happens when alum **Bill Cowher** is inducted into the Pittsburgh Steelers 2019 Hall of Honor Class? It's a win for Carlynton!



Members of the football team, coaches, and athletic directors stand at the entrance of a tunnel leading to Heinz Field before pregame ceremonies of a Monday night Steelers football game.



Alum Bill Cowher took the time to shake hands with football players and speak with head coach Rich Piccinini.



Images of the marching band flashed on the jumbo-tron in Heinz Field as the cougars marched and performed the school's alma mater and fight song.



Students laughed and cheered for the Steelers from their seating on the sideline of the field.



Cowher kneels front and center with the Carlynton High School marching band prior to the start of a Steelers game at Heinz Field.

of Crafton, along with the Steelers, invited members of the Cougar football team and the marching band to the celebration and game at Heinz Field.

During pregame ceremonies, the marching band and football team had the honor of observing the ceremony for Cowher from the field. As the Cougars lined up on the goal line, the band performed the school's alma mater and the cougar fight song at centerfield. Afterwards, the legendary alumni made his way to the students to shake hands and join them for photographs.

As one of the highlights of the evening, students and chaperones were given special seating on the field sidelines to watch the game and cheer on the Steelers. The night brought a victory for the Steelers and an even bigger win for the football team and marching band. For some, it was their first chance to attend a game.

Former Steeler greats Larry Brown, Elbie Nickel, and Hines Ward were among those to join Cowher as 2019 Hall of Honor inductees.

▲ RED RIBBON WEEK

The elementary schools celebrated national Red Ribbon Week October 21-25. During the awareness campaign, students made pledges to live a lifestyle free of drugs and alcohol and committed to being kind to one another.

The week-long event featured anti-drug and bully-free artwork created by students and hung throughout the schools. The buildings were decked out in bright red ribbons to symbolize a promise to choosing healthy habits. Lessons in classrooms tied into messages about safety, drug prevention, and practices to be kind and respectful of others.

In the spirit of Red Ribbon Week dress-up days were held to promote a healthy lifestyle. Some of the dress themes encouraged students to dress as twins (two are stronger than one when fighting the battle against drugs), or as a super hero, to remind everyone to be Helpful, Encouraging, and Respectful of Others.

Red Ribbon Week is an alcohol, tobacco, and other drug and violence prevention

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continued

awareness campaign is observed annually in the United States since 1985. As drug and alcohol abuse continues to climb in the U.S., affecting every age and demographic, the need for awareness is greater than ever.

▲ HONORING OUR VETERANS

In association with Honor Flight Pittsburgh, students in Tracy Post's American Government classes and Jamie Sonnie's Reading 8 course wrote over 200 letters to American war veterans. Messages of encouragement and gratitude were mailed and will be distributed to area veterans who will travel to Washington, D. C. in October.

Honor Flight is a non-profit organization created solely to honor America's veterans by transporting them to the nation's capital to visit and reflect at the many war memorials in the city, including the Vietnam, World War II, and Korean memorials, Arlington Cemetery and the Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns.

The purpose of the letter-writing project came at a time when American Government students were learning about World War II and the men and women who served during that time. Students in reading classes joined the effort because of related reading



While in an American Government class, junior Rose Talmonti wrote a letter to an American hero, a veteran who served in World War II.

material. Although individuals did not know the men and women to whom they were writing, they said the project gave them a chance to express goodwill and appreciation for the freedom they enjoy today because of the hardship and service of so many.

▲ DISTRICT TO BEGIN PLANNING FOR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Did you know the Carlynton School District will be celebrating its 50th anniversary during the 2020-2021 school year? That's right! Planning is in its very early stages, but we are seeking volunteers, alumni, party planners and idea generators to help us plan and celebrate this milestone. If interested in becoming involved, please email Michale Herrmann at michale.herrmann@carlynton.k12.pa.us or call 412.429.2500, ext. 1113. Please provide your name, address, phone number, email address, and let us how you are associated with the school district. We look forward to hearing from you!



Students wrote and mailed 210 letters to area men and women who served to protect our freedom.

Carlynton School District Annual Public Notice of Child Find Activities

The Carlynton School District uses the following procedures for screening, identifying, and evaluating specified needs of school-aged students requiring special programs or services. These procedures are described in this notice as required by law.

The district meets the health screening requirements as described in Section 1402 of the School Code. The district routinely conducts screenings of a child's hearing acuity in following grades: Kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, 7, and 11, and other grades according to need. Visual acuity is screened in every grade. Height and weight data are collected yearly at every grade level and Body Mass (BMI) is calculated. Visual acuity, hearing acuity, height and weight screenings are conducted throughout the school year at the child's home school. School nurses work with the private schools located within the district's boundaries to provide required screenings. Dental exams are conducted in the spring of each school year in Kindergarten, grades 3 and 7 at the respective schools. Physical exams are conducted in the spring of each year. Physicals are conducted in Kindergarten, grades 6 and 11, as well as scoliosis screenings in grades 6 and 7. Gross motor and fine motor skills, academic skills, and social-emotional skills are assessed by classroom teachers on an on-going basis. Other screening activities include but are not limited to the review of cumulative group-based achievement and ability data, health and attendance records, grades, and information shared by the parents. Specified needs from all of these screening sources are noted within the child's official file.

School records are always open and available to parents, and only to school officials who have a legitimate "need to know" information about the student. Information from the records is released to other persons or agencies only with appropriate authorization that involves written signed permission by parents.

Screening information will be used by the Student Assistance Team within the student's school to meet his or her specific needs, or to document the need for further evaluation. Student Assistance Team services are provided to students in grades K-12. The pre-referral process identifies those students at-risk for academic or behavioral needs and includes parental involvement in making determinations as to whether a student may benefit from intervention services. Individual student plans are developed and monitoring of specific goals with data to determine student progress and efficacy of interventions are put into place. If a student is not making sufficient progress, a referral for evaluation may be issued by the school district or a parent may request a multi-disciplinary evaluation at any time.

The Multidisciplinary Team consists of parents, teachers, a certified school psychologist, other related service personnel, and person familiar with the student's educational experience and cultural background. The evaluations conducted by the Team must be sufficient in scope and depth to provide information about the student's academic functioning, adaptive and social behavior, learning problems, strengths, information obtained by the Student Assistance Team, and information from the parents. After all evaluations are completed, an Evaluation Report (ER) will be compiled and include specific recommendations for the types of interventions necessary to meet the student's specific needs. This evaluation will be completed and a report sent to the parents within 60 calendar days. Parents are then invited to participate in a meeting where the result of the evaluation will be discussed.

If the student meets the criteria for the presence of a disability and need for specially designed instruction, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will then be developed for specially designed instruction for the student within 30 calendar days. The IEP team must consist of: the student's parent(s), special education teacher, regular education teacher(s), and local education agency representative (LEA). The building principal, Director of Special Education/Pupil Services will serve as the chair/LEA. School psychologists and other specialists, as needed, will attend when appropriate.

Prior to the initiation of services, parents will be presented with a Notice of Recommended Education Placement, which explains the services and educational placement recommendations. Parental consent must be obtained before providing initial special education and related services. The Procedural Safeguard Notice describes the parents' rights and options if they disagree with the individualized program presented.

When screening results suggest a student may be eligible for Gifted Education, the school district seeks parental consent to conduct a multidisciplinary evaluation. Additionally, a parent may request a multi-disciplinary evaluation at any time. The initial evaluation is summarized in the Gifted Written Report (GWR) and used by the Gifted Individualized Education Program (GIEP) team to develop the GIEP. After the initial evaluation, students identified as mentally gifted are reevaluated before a change in educational placement is



recommended or under recommendation of the GIEP team. The Notice of Recommended Assignment (NORA), signed by the parent, gives the school district permission to provide services.

SERVICES FOR ELIGIBLE SCHOOL-AGE STUDENTS

The Carlynton School District provides a free, appropriate, public education to eligible students. To qualify as an eligible student, the child must be of school age, in need of specially-designed instruction, and meet eligibility criteria for one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities, as set forth in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act and Pennsylvania State Regulations: Autism, Deaf-Blindness, Deafness, Emotional Disturbance, Hearing Impairment, Intellectual Disability, Multiple Disabilities, Orthopedic Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, Speech or Language Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, or Visual Impairment including Blindness.

The Carlynton School District provides a full range of placement options and services to eligible students. Options in the district range from supportive intervention in the regular classroom to itinerant, supplemental, or full-time levels of intervention, depending on the student's needs. Inclusive intervention practice of the general education curriculum and classroom with supplementary aids and services are the first step in the continuum of placement options. Other placement options to meet the student's needs may include, but are not limited to services secured from the Intermediate Unit, another school district, an approved private school, or a private licensed academic school program. Placement options provide for a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) for all eligible students. The District also provides related services such as, but not limited to: transportation, speech and language therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, nursing services, psychological services, social worker services, paraprofessional support, and personal care assistant services.

The following programs are currently provided within the District: Learning Support, Life Skills Support, Emotional Support, Autistic Support, Blind or Visually Impaired Support, Deaf and Hearing Impaired Support, Speech and Language Support, and Gifted Support. The small number of students who cannot be accommodated in the public school setting can receive services in an approved private school setting or other licensed facilities at school district expense. The Carlynton School District intends to serve students at the home school or within the district before considering other placements.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS HOMELESS AND/OR FOSTER CARE

The Carlynton School District follows all protections outlined in the McKinney Vento Homeless Education Act related to ensuring that any child identified as homeless or in foster care has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children. The District implements child find activities for other students in addition to those identified as homeless or in foster care such as wards of the state, highly mobile children, and migrant children in order to provide equal access to evaluations and services. Further information may be obtained by contacting the District's Pupil Services Department at 412.429.2500.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS IN NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS

Parents of non-public school students who suspect that their child has a disability and is in need of special education may request a multidisciplinary evaluation through a written request to the District's Pupil Services Department. Parents can obtain further information by contacting their child's school principal or the District Pupil Services Department at 412.429.2500.

SERVICES FOR PRESCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

Act 212, the Early Intervention System Act, entitles all preschool age children with disabilities to appropriate early intervention services. Young children experiencing developmental delays or physical or mental disabilities are eligible for early intervention services including screening, evaluation, individualized education program planning, and provision of appropriate programs and services.

The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare is responsible for providing services to infants and toddlers, defined as children from birth through two years of age. Contact the Alliance for Infants and Toddlers at 2801 Custer Ave., 2nd Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15227, 412.885.6000 or www.aift.org.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing services to preschool age children from three to five years of age. Contact Project DART of the Allegheny Intermediate Unit at 475 E. Waterfront Dr., Homestead, PA 15120, 412.394.5736 or www.aiu3.net.

The Carlynton School District ensures that all students transitioning from early intervention programs to kindergarten or first grade programs within the District are transitioned

without disruption of services. Parents of children entering school age programs are notified of the District's transition activities, which occur before kindergarten registration of each year. The District follows the federal and state regulations pertaining to the evaluation process and based on identified needs, subsequent documentation and provision of special education and relate services.

INFORMATION REGARDING SIGNS OF DEVELOPMENTAL DELAYS AND OTHER RISK FACTORS FOR PARENTS TO LOOK FOR THAT MAY INDICATE THE POSSIBILITY OF A DISABILITY

If your child is less than the age of beginners (age 5 before August 15) and at least 3 years of age, your child may be considered to have a developmental delay when difficulties exist in the areas of cognitive, communicative, physical, social/emotional, and self-help development where a delay in comparison to typical development is present. Parents who have questions about their child's development or possible presence of a disability may talk with their family physician or health care provider or contact the Allegheny Health Department at 412.687.2243.

If you have questions regarding difficulties your child may be experiencing, please contact the Pupil Services Department at 412.429.2500.

Potential signs of developmental delay and other risk factors that could indicate the presence of a disability may include:

By the age of 3: Not saying many words, not using 2-3 word phrases and sentences; not walking; awkward gait (walking); excessive salivation; not answering "show" or "what" questions, and/or not using utensils to feed self.

By the age of (all of the above included): Not toilet trained; difficulty with directional words (in, on, under, out); not playing with other children; not able to draw a circle, cross or imitate a vertical line; not able to understand the child's speech most of the time; and/or difficulty following simple two-step directions.

By the age of 5 (all of the above included); Unable to answer "where" questions; unable to recall details from a story; not drawing a person with at least 6 parts; immature speech patterns ("me" instead of "I"); and not able to hop forward on one foot without support.

Other warning signs at any age: Little or no eye contact, over/under sensitivities to pain, light, noise; hand flapping; no awareness of space (always bumping into other people or things); awkward hand or foot positioning; won't touch or eat certain textures; child no longer can do things he/she used to do; developed normally, then stopped; echoes what is said; and/or plays with toys inappropriately (watch wheels spin on a car toy, but does not play with the car).

PROTECTED HANDICAPPED STUDENTS/ CHAPTER 15

The Carlynton School District, in compliance with state and federal law, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Chapter 15 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code, will provide to each protect handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services, or accommodations which are needed to provide the student equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student, the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability or diagnosis, which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program. These services and protections for "protected handicapped students" are distinct from those applicable to all eligible or exceptional students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs.

For further information on the evaluation procedures and provisions of services to protected handicapped students, contact the Pupil Services Department at 412.429.2500.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS

The Carlynton School District and its employees are required by Federal Law and State and Federal Rules and Regulations to protect the rights of students including confidentiality of personally identifiable information for all students in accordance with state and federal law and the District's student records policy. The foundation of these rights comes from Federal legislation entitled, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (also known as the Buckley Amendments). There are State Rules and Regulations dealing with regular and special education students' rights and privacy. All students are covered by the State Regulations contained in Chapter 12 known as Students' Rights and Responsibilities.

The basic premise of the above-mentioned laws, rules, and regulations is that information about students cannot be disclosed without written parental consent. There are different categories of information: Educational Records, Personally Identifiable Information, and Directory Information.

Educational Records consist of information directly related to students which are maintained by the educational agency. Personally Identifiable Information includes the student's name, the name of the parent or other family members, a personal identifier or a list of personal characteristics that would make the student's identity and traceable.

Educational Records and Personally Identifiable Information cannot be disclosed or released without written parent consent, or if a student is over 18, without student permission.

There is certain information that can be released without consent, which is called Directory Information. Directory Information means information contained in an educational records of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The School District designates what information is labeled as Directory Information. It shall include the following: the student's name, address, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student.

Disclosure of information means to permit access to or the release, transfer, or other communication of educational records, or the personally identifiable information contained in these records, to any party, by any means, including oral, written, or electronic means. This means that information about a student cannot even be shared in conversation without permission. This also applies to other Carlynton personnel who do not have an educationally relevant reason to possess knowledge of a student.

Written parental consent is necessary for disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information and Educational Records. The consent must: (1) specify the records that may be disclosed; (2) state the purpose of the disclosure; (3) identify the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made. Furthermore, the Carlynton School District must maintain a written record of disclosure for the parents to inspect in case information has been released.

In accordance with 34 CFR §300.624, please be advised of the following retention/destruction schedule for the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA), Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), and Keystone Exam Related Materials:

- PSSA, Keystone Exam, and PASA test booklets will be destroyed one year after student reports are delivered for the administration associated with the test booklets.
- PSSA and Keystone Exam answer booklets and PASA media recordings will be destroyed three years after the completion of the assessment.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Carlynton School District will not discriminate in its education programs, activities, or employment practice, based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual preference, disability, age, religion, ancestry, union membership, or any other legally protected classification. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Employees and participants who have an inquiry or complaint of harassment or discrimination, or who need information about accommodations for person with disabilities, should contact: Office of the Superintendent, 435 Kings Hwy, Carnegie, PA 15106, 412.429.2500, or the Director of the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 400 Maryland Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., 20202-1100.

Carnegie Elementary
301 Franklin Ave.
Carnegie, PA 15106
Lauren Baughman, Principal

Crafton Elementary
1874 Crafton Blvd. Pittsburgh, PA 15205
Marsha Burleson, Principal

Carlynton Jr./Sr. High School
435 Kings Highway
Carnegie, PA 15106
Michael Loughren, Principal
Rachel Gattuso, Assistant Principal

Pupil Services Department
435 Kings Highway
Carnegie, PA 15106
Dr. Rachel Andler,
Director of Special Ed/Pupil Services