

# HARTFORD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



HARTFORD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

## MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

It is my hope that everyone is enjoying the fall season and has now settled into the new school year!

While it is hard to believe, we are now ten-weeks into the new school year and activities within the district are now fully engaged. Courses are beyond the introductory period, the students have settled into a routine, and our faculty and staff are working hard with our students on implementing the higher-level thinking skills that are associated, and required, with the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). Teaching and learning are now quite different with the state's adoption of the CCLS and our faculty is doing a tremendous job of integrating the new standards, while still helping our students feel comfortable and successful within the classroom. Even though the CCLS are rooted in English-Language Arts and Math, teachers across the various content areas are working to incorporate the CCLS into their own curriculum as a way to further advance our students' abilities. Over the past few months there has been a great deal of discussion and debate regarding the CCLS and their affect on children and schools; especially in regards to the revised 3-8 state ELA and Math exams and the corresponding student scores. To help provide additional clarification on the CCLS, we have included within the newsletter some valuable information that is specifically designed for parents and guardians. This information should help answer any questions that you might have regarding the standards and present a clearer picture of what is expected of our students. Also included within the newsletter is some important information regarding registering for the STAR exemption, our parent portal (grades 6-12), advocating for HCS, and a number of other important notices. It is my hope that you find this information valuable! If you have any questions regarding your child's academic programming, please feel free to contact the district. Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Cook". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

ELEMENTARY UPDATE	2
SECONDARY UPDATE	3
STAR EXEMPTION INFORMATION	4
JANUARY 2014 REGENTS SCHEDULE	4
PARENT PORTAL	5
COMMON CORE LEARNING STANDARDS	6
ANNUAL FIRE NOTICE	8
CALENDAR OF EVENTS	8
HOMELESSNESS INFORMATION	9
SCHOOLMESSENGER	9
ADVOCACY	9
DISTANCE LEARNING	10
HOLIDAY HELPER	11
CONTACT INFO.	12

## Elementary Report

Dear Parents, Guardians and Community Members,

The school year is off to a positive start and it is wonderful to have students back in the building after a quiet summer! With the full implementation of Common Core Learning Standards this year, students are learning on a much deeper level. The goal of meeting Common Core Standards is to better prepare our students for college and careers. That being said, your child may need additional support with homework to fully understand new concepts. Your time and support at home are greatly appreciated. Working together, I am confident that our students will rise to meet these higher expectations.



*Elementary student working with the MS/HS FFA on pumpkin painting.*

Beyond the academics, our elementary students are enjoying some after school clubs and activities in addition to special activities within the school day. Each month, we have a Citizens' Assembly to recognize as many students as possible. The first Tanager Pride parties will be held in November to celebrate students who display positive behavior and are "bucket fillers!" Please ask your child about being a bucket filler...it is a nice way of reminding students that everyone has feelings and when we make others feel good, we make ourselves feel good too! On November 15<sup>th</sup>, students will participate in a Harvest Breakfast and afternoon Harvest Fest, learning about 6 different topics that will enrich their educational experience. November ends with Parent-Teacher Conferences on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. It is my hope that all parents will attend conferences to learn more about their child's progress in the academic setting.



*Mrs. Thomas, a current BOE member and retired Hartford Art teacher, instructing Mrs. Lawrence's second grade class on papermaking.*

The curriculum our teachers must follow is new to everyone and we appreciate your support

at home and your understanding that student expectations are higher than in the past. Hartford School employs wonderful faculty and staff members who are diligently working to provide all students with a solid foundation for success. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions. I look forward to a continued partnership between home and school.

Sincerely,

Bethellen C. Mannix



*Elementary students working with the MS/HS FFA on pumpkin painting.*

## Middle/High School Report

As the leaves begin to fall and the days become shorter, the school year is now in full swing.

Congratulations to our Boys Modified and Varsity Soccer Programs. The teams had to deal with some injuries and face a lot of adversity this year, but never made excuses and fought hard all year long. Both programs grew a lot throughout the season and we are all very proud of how well they performed.



Congratulations to our girls modified, JV, and Varsity Volleyball programs as well. The girls really worked hard this season and you could see how the teams came together as the season progressed.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank all of our coaches for all of their hard work and dedication throughout the season. Our players and school are lucky to have you, and I would like to personally thank you for a wonderful fall sports season.

Thank you to all of our parents and guardians who were able to attend our Open House on Thursday, October 3, 2013. I was very impressed with the turn out and thankful for the opportunity to converse and meet so many of you. As we all know, parental involvement in our child's education is so important, and our staff greatly appreciates all of your support!

### Parent Portal

The Hartford Central School District is always looking for opportunities to increase our communication with parents and provide them with information to help their child reach their full potential. Parent Portal is an internet based program which allows parents and guardians access to their children's schedule, attendance and academic information. To have access to this wonderful new program parents, can pick up an application at any of our school offices, download a copy from our website [www.hartfordcsd.org](http://www.hartfordcsd.org), or see page 5 of this newsletter.

The 2013-2014 school year has been extremely busy thus far. Let's take a look at what some of our students have been up too:

- **Key Club-** Seven members of our Key club organization along with Mr. Farley volunteered their time to help out at this year's Taste of the North Country. Key club members under the guidance of Mrs. Barnard helped set up and break down the set for the Glens Falls Symphony Orchestra. On November 6<sup>th</sup>, members of the Key club and Mr. Flower will attend a Leadership Conference at the Queensbury Hotel.
- **FFA-** Conducted a Chicken BBQ on October 4 and sold 192 dinners (Thank you Mr. Cook). On October 27<sup>th</sup>, 5 members will be attending the National FFA Convention in Louisville, KY. For a limited time the FFA is having a Fruit Basket fund raiser. Get them while they last!
- **Crayola Colorcycle-** The 7<sup>th</sup> grade class is collecting used markers which will be recycled and converted into clean fuel used to heat homes and power vehicles. If you have any old markers please send them in with your child to be "Colorcycled".

I am happy to announce our Distance Learning room is fully operational. Students are currently taking a number of courses through the Distance Learning room, and we hope to offer more courses in the Spring and in the future. Besides offering courses, the distance learning room provided Mrs. Barnard's, Spanish III class, the opportunity to meet and converse with a group of Foreign Exchange students from Spain. Mrs. Barnard said her students loved it, and what a wonderful opportunity it was for her class to have this unique experience.

I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season, and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

*Brian George*

## School Property Tax Relief

All New York State homeowners receiving a Basic STAR property tax exemption must register with the New York State Tax Department in order to receive the Star exemption for 2014 and subsequent years.

- All Basic STAR recipients should have received registration instructions by mail.
- Visit the NYS STAR website at [www.tax.ny.gov](http://www.tax.ny.gov) to register now!
- The registration deadline is December 31, 2013.
- Please call (518) 457-2036 with any questions.

Important Note: Senior Citizens receiving Enhanced STAR benefits are not affected by the new registration requirement. In order to continue to receive Enhanced STAR, seniors must continue to:

- Apply annually or,
- Participate in the Income Verification Program

## January 2014 Regents Examination Schedule

Monday January 27th	Tuesday January 28th	Wednesday January 29th	Thursday January 29th
8:15a.m.	8:15a.m.	8:15a.m.	8:15a.m.
Living Environment RCT : Global Studies	Global Studies RCT: Writing	U.S. History Geometry RCT: Science	Integrated Algebra RCT: U.S. History
Noon	Noon	Noon	Noon
Comprehensive ELA Physics	Algebra 2/Trig. RCT: Math	Earth Science Chemistry RCT: Reading	

Uniform Admission Times (*students are not allowed to enter an exam after this time*):

- Morning Exams: 10a.m.
- Afternoon Exams: 2p.m.

*If you are interested in taking one of the listed exams, please contact Mrs. Harrington in the Guidance Office.*

## SchoolTools: Parent Portal

The Hartford Central School District is pleased to offer our parents and guardians of students in grades 6-12 with the opportunity to access their student(s) records through the SchoolTool Parent Portal. In order to protect the privacy and confidentiality of our students' records, all parents and/or guardians who would like to gain access to the portal are required to complete this form and return it in person to the Guidance Office. For security purposes, a photo ID is required when returning this form.

Parents/Guardians are required to adhere to the following SchoolTool Parent Portal guidelines:

- Parents/Guardians will access data solely in regard to their child(ren).
- Parents/Guardians will not access any account assigned to another user.
- Please do not share your password with anyone, including your children.
- Please do not allow your computer to "remember" your Parent Portal password.

Parent/Guardian Name

(One per form): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Email Address (Required): \_\_\_\_\_

*Only one email per application. Your email address will be your user name.*

Please list all children who are/will be enrolled within the Hartford Central School District	Your relationship to the Student	Reside with the Student? (Yes or No)	Grade

*You only need to complete this form once. New Children will automatically be entered.*

I have read the SchoolTool Parent Access Form and agree to abide by and support the guidelines. I certify that all of the above information is true and I have legal authority to access the records of the student(s) listed above.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Important:** Once the information on this form is received and processed, you will receive notification via email that your SchoolTool Parent Portal account has been created. The email will also contain instructions to complete the registration process.

For Office Use Only

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_ ID Verified: by Whom? \_\_\_\_\_

Account Created Date: \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_

## COMMON CORE LEARNING STANDARDS (CCLS)

**What can you expect from your child?** The CCLS are more focused, rigorous, and relevant to the long-term success of students. The standards are providing students with more time to gain a greater understanding in order to master increasingly complex material. They also ensure that students are prepared to enter college and have the experiences necessary to compete with their peers around the world in the workforce. As a result, CCLS are more relevant to what students will need to know to succeed in subsequent grades and eventually in life after graduation. The English-Language Arts standards will require students to read more difficult texts sooner and discuss what they read at more complex levels. For example, instead of working solely on a specific reading skill, students will be reading or listening to multiple stories and comparing those stories using their understanding of several text elements. In most circumstances, the students will also be prompted to provide and apply textual evidence to answer questions and complete tasks. In addition, there will be an increased focus on nonfiction with a balance between literature and informational texts.

In math, the standards will focus on more real-world applications of mathematics with fewer standards in each grade while students delve much deeper into mathematical concepts. By focusing on critical thinking and reasoning skills, the CCLS encourages students to find solutions to real-world problems which will help them relate to mathematics in a motivating and inspiring way.

Finally, Common Core aligned assessments will likely be more difficult because they will require students to answer in-depth questions by analyzing and synthesizing information and constructing essay responses. Many assessments will also be computer-based. Therefore, we should expect that our students may initially struggle with their typical level of success with assessments while transitioning into CCLS.

### Common Core State Standards Are:

- **A set of K-12 standards** in English language arts and mathematics, designed to prepare students for college and career-readiness.
- **A state-led initiative.** Two organizations, the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers led standards development.
- **Voluntary.** Adoption of the standards was left to individual states. Forty-five of them, along with the District of Columbia and four territories have adopted them.

### Common Core State Standards Are Not:

- **A common curriculum.** Each teacher should be trusted to have the expertise to determine how best to teach their standards with guidance from their state and district. The standards do not mean common curriculum or textbooks.
- **An elimination of literature.** While there is an emphasis on nonfiction reading in accordance with preparation for college and careers, teachers can still teach quality literature and use that literature to meet standards.
- **A system to collect data on students.** While states may collect data and test scores to aid in policy setting and identify needs and successes, this is NOT a requirement of the Common Core initiative.

*Information is taken from "ECET2 Transformers - Common Core State Standards: A Parent's Guide"*



## Working with the "Shifts"

### *What Parents Can Do to Help their Children Learn*

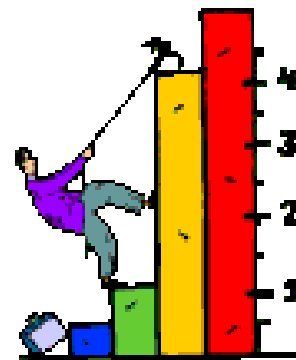
The Common Core State Standards ask teachers to make 12 major “shifts” or changes in their classrooms – six shifts in English language arts and six shifts in Mathematics. These changes will be difficult initially as students and teachers adjust to higher expectations associated with the CCLS.

As a parent, you can help and learn more by talking with your child about what they are learning. Ask open-ended questions about what they learned in school each day, read their homework and attend school events to learn about what their teachers expect.

### Common Core Instructional Shifts

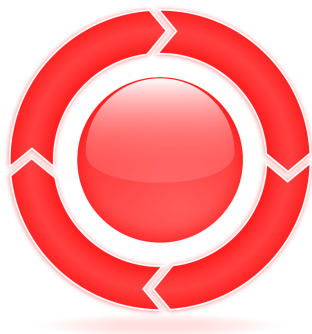
#### Math Shifts

Shift 1	Focus
Shift 2	Coherence
Shift 3	Fluency
Shift 4	Deep Understanding
Shift 5	Application
Shift 6	Dual Intensity



#### ELA Shifts

Shift 1	Pre-K-5: Balancing Informational and Literacy
Shift 2	6-12: Knowledge in the Disciplines
Shift 3	Staircase of Complexity
Shift 4	Text-based Answers
Shift 5	Writing From Sources
Shift 6	Academic Vocabulary



### Annual Fire Inspection Notice

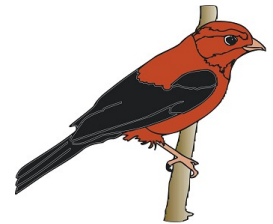
In accordance with Educational Law, Section 807-a 5 (b) and (c), notice is hereby given that the annual fire inspection for 2013-2014 of the Hartford Central School District, including the primary building, technology building, and the bus garage for fire hazards which might endanger the lives of students, teachers, and employees therein, has been completed and the report is available at the District offices for inspection of all interested persons.



### Calendar of Events

*Please note: all events are subject to date and time changes. Please contact the district with any questions regarding the scheduling of events and refer to the district calendar at [www.hartfordcsd.org](http://www.hartfordcsd.org) for any updated information.*

November 11th	Veteran's Day - Classes are not in session
November 12th	Turkey Trot (Grades 3-8)
November 15th	6th Grade Pig-Roast Harvest Festival (Elementary)
November 18th	Board of Education Meeting
November 21st	Dime-A-Dip
November 22nd, 25th, 26th	11:30a.m. dismissal for students in grades K-8 for Parent/Teacher Conferences
November 27th - 29th	Thanksgiving Recess
December 9th - 11th	PTA Holiday Shop
December 11th	Tanager Voices Concert
December 16th	Board of Education Meeting
December 19th	PTA Movie Night (Grades 3-5) Dime-A-Dip Jr./Sr. Band and Chorus Concert
December 22nd - January 3rd	Holiday Recess
January 13th	Board of Education Meeting
January 16th	Dime-A-Dip
January 20th	Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Classes are not in session
January 27th - 30th	Regents Exams



*For up-to-date athletic schedules, please visit the "Athletics" page at [www.hartfordcsd.org](http://www.hartfordcsd.org), which also provides a link to Google maps for driving directions to all away contests.*



### **NYSED Parent Portal**

NYSED will be launching a parent portal for parents and guardians to access their student's attendance and achievement level on state assessments. Once the portal is on-line (*there is no established timetable*) the district will provide the link on our webpage.

### **Homeless Students**

Homeless students have certain rights and protections afforded to them under the McKinney-Veto Act. If you, or someone you know is homeless and would like additional information, please contact Mrs. Harrington, Homeless Coordinator, at 518-632-5222.

A homeless student is one who lacks a "fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence". This can include:

- Sharing a home due to economic hardship or loss of housing;
- Living in a hotel, motel, car, campground, or trailer park due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- Are abandoned in hospitals; or
- Are awaiting foster care placement

### **SchoolMessenger System**

In order to help facilitate timely notices, the district has now partnered with a district-wide messenger system which has the ability to call our parents and guardians with important information and opportune reminders. To ensure you are receiving all messages, please update the district with any changes in your home and cell phone numbers.

*Please note: this system is only available for parents and guardians. However, in Emergency situations, messages will be sent to anyone listed in the student's emergency contact list.*

### **Help Advocate for Hartford!**

In 2010-2011, NYS enacted the "Gap Elimination Adjustment" (GEA) as a way to help close the state's budget deficit by withholding state aid from school districts across the state. The table below displays how much aid has been withheld from our students as a result of the GEA:

Year	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	Total Withholdings
Money Withheld	-\$780,316	-\$1,024,771	-\$903,274	-\$690,359	-\$3,398,693

It is very important for our state representatives to hear our dissatisfaction with the GEA and how it is negatively affecting our students. Please contact our representatives through email, Facebook, twitter, telephone calls, and letters asking for help in providing our students the best education possible.

Please visit [www.hartfordcsd.org](http://www.hartfordcsd.org) and click on the link titled "Advocacy" for more information, including sample advocacy letters and contact information for our government representatives.

## Distance Learning

On September 4th, Hartford went live with distance learning! This exciting venture allows students the opportunity to enroll in classes that are not offered in their home district without ever having to leave the building. Through fiber-optics and HD technology, students in Hartford now have the ability to enroll in unique courses offered by other school districts throughout the Capital Region.

The idea of distance learning is not a new educational practice. However, for seven Washington country districts (Hartford, Fort Ann, Cambridge, Hudson Falls, Salem, and Argyle) the practicality of distance learning came to fruition as a result of the CASDA regionalization study. According to Superintendent Cook, "given the current economic conditions and uncertainty of state aid, distance learning is an excellent way in which to provide our students with expanded academic opportunities, while, at the same time, maintaining our current programming through a cooperative agreement with the other districts." While using distance learning, districts can either "host" classes (the teacher is teaching in-house) or "receive" classes (the students are receiving instruction from a different district). Currently, Hartford is receiving two courses: Nanotechnology (Argyle CSD) and Health (Fort Ann), and hosting three courses: Pre-Calculus, ENG 101, and ENG 108; all through SUNY Adirondack with Fort Ann CSD receiving the courses.



*Hartford students Elias, David, Ethan, Kurt, and Scott taking part in a Nanotechnology class taught by the Argyle Central School District through Distance Learning.*

Ms. Lourie, who teaches Pre-Calculus through the distance learning network is really enjoying the experience and believes that there are additional benefits incorporated with DL for our students. According to Lourie, "I think the DL is a great way for students from different schools to work together to solve problems. The students are amazed to see that the kids on the other side of the screen not only succeed when they succeed, but also seem to struggle when they struggle. I think this similarity allows them to be able to feel good about where they are as students." Lourie continued, "One of the proudest moments I have witnessed, is the collaboration that is taking place among the students within each of their



*Ms. Lourie instructing a Pre-Calculus course through distance learning.*



*A view of the front of the distance learning classroom. The tv and projection screens display course curriculum, the other students participating in the class, and the instructor. Also pictured, one of HCSD mobile computer labs..*

schools and then across the DL. In my own classroom I am able to get around and see everyone's work and point on their mistakes and commend their successes, with the DL that pretty much becomes impossible....so the students are taking this on. They look at each other's work and find where the mistakes are, they then help each other get to the right place. It is pretty AMAZING"! In addition, Ms. McGuirk who teaches ENG through DL remarked that "the support is phenomenal" and that "integrating the DL hardware with other software programs (Google, Smart, i-Tunes, and Diigo) has been a dream." For any additional information regarding distance learning or to discuss potential classes, please feel free to contact the district.

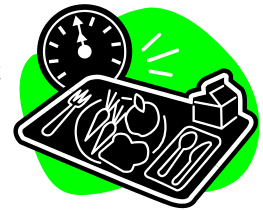
### Holiday Helper

2013 Holiday Helper Applications have been mailed home to prior applicants. If you are in need of assistance for the holidays and did not receive an application, please contact Mrs. Shaw at 518-632-5222, extension 513 or [tshaw@hartfordcsd.org](mailto:tshaw@hartfordcsd.org).



### Cafeteria Updates

- Sandwich Bar: Grades 6-12 now have the option of made to order sandwiches and salads with our new sandwich/salad bar. This option is available on Wednesdays and includes fresh vegetables, meats, cheese, and other toppings.
- Breakfast: student breakfasts consist of four food groups. To qualify for a student priced meal, the student(s) must take three of the four groups offered, although students can take all four groups. However, when the necessary items are not taken, a higher a-la carte price must be charged.



### Washington County Children's Committee

The Washington County Children's Committee is dedicated to assisting "in meeting the financial deficits of children in Washington County. Emphasis is placed on educational, social, and health-related needs."

*What we do?* Grants for families in crisis, emergency school requests, camperships for foster and needy children, monthly allowances, and Christmas gifts for foster children

*Referrals:* The Guidance department for each district works with the county in assisting a scholarship to at least one need student in the district.

*What Can I Do To Help?* Income for these programs is received from private and business donations. Please consider making a donation. Send all donations to:

Treasurer, 333 Aviation Road, Queensbury, NY 12804

# HARTFORD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

PO Box 79

4704 State Route 149

Hartford, New York 12838

518-632-5222

## Superintendent

Andrew Cook

## Middle/High School Principal

Brian George

## Elementary Principal

Bethellen Mannix

## Board of Education

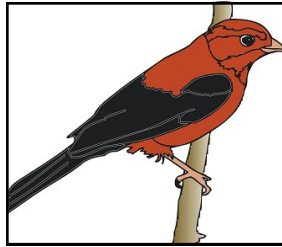
Brian Getty, President

Janine Thomas, Vice President

Philip Jessen

Adam Fish

Ron Smith



Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Hartford, N.Y. 12838  
Permit #1

Follow the district on Twitter: @HartfordCSD

### 2013-2014 Board of Education

#### Remaining Meeting Dates

*7:00 P.M. in the School Library*

**November 18, 2013**

**December 16, 2013**

**January 13, 2014**

**February 10, 2014**

**March 17, 2014**

**April 28, 2014**

**May 19, 2014**

**June 16, 2014**

Please visit the district website at [www.hartfordcsd.org](http://www.hartfordcsd.org). The site is continually updated and provides helpful links, a staff directory, important documents available for download, all district communications, and a great deal of other information that can help keep you informed and your student informed.