

# COMMUNITY CONNECTION



A PUBLICATION OF THE CHEEKTOWAGA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

FALL 2018

## Happy Birthday, Union East Elementary School

# District School Celebrates 50 Years

When school starts Sept. 5, Union East Elementary School will mark its 50th year since the first students walked into brand new classrooms in September 1968.

But planning for the new school started well before 1968. By 1965 the Board of Education had already been hard at work trying to convince residents of then-Cheektowaga Central School District No. 1 that an additional school building was needed to meet the expanding population. Following a bond issue defeat in September 1965, the Board downscaled its proposal, and the bond ultimately passed in December 1966. Construction began the following year, and the first Union East students entered their brand new classrooms in September 1968.

To commemorate Union East's golden anniversary, staff at the school have formed a committee to plan not just one, but several, celebrations. Dan Quigley, a universal pre-kindergarten teacher at Union East and a member of the committee, said they are planning a t-shirt sale, dance party in the parking lot, open house, and showcases displaying memorabilia.

Union East Elementary School Principal Melissa Mitchell, also a member of the committee planning the celebrations, thinks it's going to be a very exciting year. "It's a nice way to celebrate everything that has happened over the past 50 years, as well as look forward," she said. "Children will be engaged in learning about the history of their school."

-Libby Maeder, Newsletter Editor



In this photo from 1960, the first principal of Union East Elementary School, Robert Stotz, congratulates 10-year-old David Mazierski. David won a \$25 savings bond for naming the new school Union East because the school would serve children residing "east of the Thruway." Students entered Union East classrooms for the first time in September 1968.



Board President Robert Nagowski smooths mortar onto bricks on the cornerstone of the brand new school at dedication ceremonies in May 1969.

more photos on page 3

## First Day, School Hours

The first day of school for all students (UPK-12) is Wed., Sept. 5

### 2018-2019 School Hours

**Union East: K-4** 8:55 a.m. – 3:20 p.m.  
UPK 9:15 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

**Middle School:** 8:10 a.m. – 2:40 p.m.  
(Grades 5-8)

**High School:** 7:22 a.m. – 1:47 p.m.  
(Grades 9-12)

## Inside this issue...

Message from the Superintendent . . . . .	2
Class of 2018 Top 10 Seniors . . . . .	2
Project Positive: Endless Opportunities for Learning . . . . .	3
Game Changer: Warriors have a Brand New Field . . . . .	4-5
Warriors Win Big in 2017-18 Five Teams of Champions . . . . .	5
State Champion Moss . . . . .	5
Annual Reminders . . . . .	6-7

## School Bus Information

All parents and guardians registered in the Cheektowaga Central School District should receive notification from WNY Bus Company with the time and location of the bus that will be transporting their children to and from school in the 2018-19 school year.

**If you do not receive this information by Aug. 30, contact WNY Bus Company at 681-2100.**

## Welcome Back from the Superintendent

Welcome to the 2018-19 school year at Cheektowaga Central. This school year my three priorities on which to focus are: a high level of learning for all; the whole child; and 21st century skills. It has been a summer of rebuilding our instructional programs and facilities to ensure students receive the best. What follows is a snapshot of what we accomplished.



Superintendent  
Mary Morris

A high level of learning for all:

- Developed a K-8 writing roadmap that will require your child to produce high quality writing pieces on a consistent basis.
- K-8 math teachers spent two weeks training with Dr. David Wilson and Professor Nirmala Nutaki, professors from Buffalo State College.
- The district received another math/science partnership grant concentrating on math instruction at the high school level.
- Additional curriculum work in science, ELA, and social studies to enhance the programs that are offered to your child.
- Special education teachers participated in a two-day workshop focused on Specially Designed Instruction.

### The whole child:

- The district Pupil Personnel Services team has begun the process of working with the University at Buffalo Institute on Trauma Informed Care in Schools.
- A weeklong Institute on Restorative Practices was offered to administrators and teachers.

### 21st century skills:

- Phase one of our 1:1 technology initiative included rolling out Chromebook computers to every K-12 teacher.
- Additionally, every Union East classroom will have SMART boards to facilitate instruction.

### Capital Project and Facility Update

Our Buildings & Grounds staff, along with Turner Construction and architects Gordon Jones & Associates, have accomplished numerous upgrades. I commend all of them for their hard work and dedication.

*continued on page 3*

# Class of 2018 Top 10 Seniors



**#1  
Karissa Vullo  
Valedictorian**

100.6% GPA  
University at Buffalo



**#2  
Jacob Curr  
Salutatorian**

97.4% GPA  
Buffalo State  
College



**#3  
Huy Dang**

97.2% GPA  
University at Buffalo



**#4  
Luke  
Mortellaro**

96.9% GPA  
Medaille College



**#5  
Krista Hctor**

96.5% GPA  
SUNY Geneseo



**#6  
Sakhr Abdo**

95.9% GPA  
Erie Community  
College



**#7  
Noah Williams**

95.1% GPA  
The College at  
Brockport, SUNY



**#8  
Chloe Benz**

94.8% GPA  
Gannon University



**#9  
Destiny Gioia**

94.7% GPA  
SUNY Fredonia



**#10  
Madison  
Klopfe**

94.0% GPA  
Entering the  
workforce

## Project Positive:

# Endless Opportunities for Learning

– Nicole Kerner, Project Positive Coordinator



In preparation for the 2018-19 school year, during the summer Project Positive Tier 1 and Tier 2 Project Positive teams in each building spent many hours over the summer diligently planning for the 2018-19 school year. The teams carefully analyzed student and teacher surveys, discipline data, and other assessments. Tier 1 teams made plans to strengthen their current acknowledgement system, discussed possible school-wide celebration ideas, identified alternate classroom interventions for promoting learning, and planned the logistics for their student & staff kick offs. Tier 2 teams strengthened their supports by identifying interventions for students not responding to traditional Tier 1 instruction/supports.

We will continue to cultivate a learning environment that encourages endless opportunities for learning for all of our students and the importance of the 5Bs: be on time and ready, be respectful, be responsible, be safe, and be kind. With support from home and at school, we are looking forward to another successful year for our students.

## Superintendent's Message

*continued from page 2*

New procedures for visiting our buildings have been completed. This will enhance the safety and security of our students. Further information will be coming from each building.

A shade structure will be installed through the generous donation made by the Union East PTA. Their immediate response to our difficult situation-removing dead/diseased ash trees before they became a hazard--is so appreciated.

Over almost 30 years I have come to admire the devotion and perseverance that Cheektowagans display for their children. Your commitment to learning is inspirational. I am looking forward to celebrating another exciting year with you. I hope you will join me in our first two celebrations on Sept. 7. On that day, Union East Elementary School will begin its yearlong 50th birthday celebration. That evening, our new stadium will be officially opened with a dedication ceremony at the 7 p.m. varsity football game as the Warriors take on the East Aurora-Holland Blue Devils.

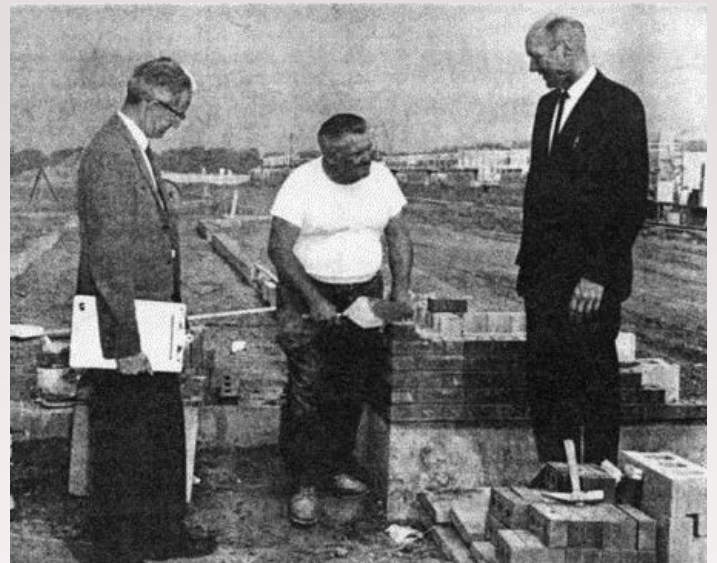
## 50 Years of Union East Elementary continued from page 1

### Union East Elementary Cornerstone



*Members of the Board of Education of Central School District No. 1 of Cheektowaga, N.Y., assemble at the new cornerstone of Union East Elementary School in 1969.*

### Construction Begins in 1967



*Union East Principal Richard Stotz, a construction worker, and an architect from the firm of Robert J. Stoll and Associates confer as construction of the new school begins in 1967.*



### Dan Quigley, Class of 1993

*UPK teacher Dan Quigley, Class of 1993, attended Union East himself and is a driving force behind this year's Union East 50th birthday celebrations.*

# Unified Programs Open to District Students

## Band, Basketball and Bowling Bring Unity and Joy

Unified programs at Cheektowaga Central School District will be in their third year starting in September and have been a rousing success.

Unified programs in band, basketball and bowling are open to students with intellectual disabilities and students in general education. The students all participate together in the sport or activity as they learn new skills, have fun, and support each other.

Unified basketball and bowling will be again be offered in the spring, providing every student with a unique team experience in the popular sports. Unity Band will also be offered, giving students the opportunity to musically express themselves. Music teacher Kacy Dolan often starts rehearsal with a drum circle for students to get focused and practice their rhythms, or even play a solo. Some students started learning to play the trumpet in 2017-18, and Mr. Dolan gives each of those students a mini trumpet lesson during rehearsals. Students may sign up to do a solo in the “showcase” at the end of each weekly practice, where they get up in front of the group and sing or play their instrument.

“This program has certainly been a rewarding experience for me as a music educator to see the joy that music brings to students of all levels,” says Mr. Dolan. “We have students from second grade all the way up to seniors who support and enjoy hearing each other perform.”



# Game Changer: Warriors have a Brand New Field

## Gerald J. Hickson Stadium Dedicated to 1970s Parent who Helped Save Activities

Talk to Athletic Director Brian Hickson about the just-completed stadium that is the new home of the Warriors in the Cheektowaga Central School District, and you’ll get all the excitement, praise and positivity you expect from an athletic director. But you’ll also get “the rest of the story,” as Paul Harvey used to say in his radio broadcasts.

You’ll hear how in the late 1970s, extracurricular programs in the district were about to get the axe due to drastic budget cuts. That’s when a group of parents from 10 families—Mr. Hickson’s parents Gerald and Elaine Hickson among them—joined forces and saved sports and other extracurricular activities.

“Our budget had gone down for a second time,” recalled Brian Hickson. “There was a lot of discontent...people just weren’t happy. So a group of parents got together after the budget had failed for the second time. My father was part of that. There were meetings at our house when I was growing up, to talk about what could be done to save after-school activities and not mandating a ‘pay to play’ policy for the students of Cheektowaga Central.”

It wasn’t just athletics that the parents were working to save. “Extracurriculars were gone—it was the play, it was music, after-school clubs, a lot of things that kids nowadays just assume are always going to be there.”

The parents called their organization the “Concerned Parents Group,” but they could have called it the “Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is Group.” Because in a move almost impossible to imagine today, each of the parents put up their own money to keep sports and other activities they believed were too important to lose. Ten families donated \$1,500 each to the District, a figure that when adjusted to 2018 dollars comes in at approximately \$6,300 each.

Once the programs were safe, the Concerned Parents Group commenced fundraising. “They had a lot of spaghetti dinners, they had events for people to come out and support our students and also to help reimburse the families,” said Mr. Hickson. In addition to the Hicksons, other members were longtime former Board of Education Trustee and President Raymond Carr, Mike Catanzaro, Bill Wayne, Leo Swistak, Leon Ruszczuk, Dan Zawadiwskyi, Leonard Lorenz Sr., Ron Uetzer, and Jerry Zwara, and their wives.

### From Then to Now

Fast forward to 2018. Brian Hickson, who well remembers those parent meetings at his house, is District athletic director, and the brand new stadium is being named for his late father. The Board of Education felt strongly that the new stadium should carry Gerald Hickson’s name, as a tribute to his leadership as president of the Concerned Parents Group; his decade of service on past boards of education, including as president; and his many contributions to youth athletics in the Town of Cheektowaga. Gerald Hickson died in 2011.

Brian Hickson, a 1985 graduate of Central, joined the staff in 1991 as a varsity wrestling coach, became a teacher in the mid-1990s, and in 2000 was named athletic director and dean of students. He says it’s been a blessing to come back.

“I think it means a lot more when you grew up somewhere in a place like Cheektowaga. You walk the same hallways, you sit in the same chairs—sometimes the very same chairs,” he said with a laugh. “To come back and be part of the fabric, it’s pretty cool. It’s very humbling. I have been able to continue to give back to this community, which is very important to me.”

As athletic director, he’s been involved in stadium planning along with the superintendent, director of facilities, and principals. “We tried to formulate a plan to address as many needs as we could, keeping a budget in mind. It wasn’t ‘everybody’s going to get everything they want,’ you have to operate within a budget.”

Ground was broken in February, and thanks to nonstop construction work since then, everything is ready for the start of the fall season. The crown jewel: the new multipurpose, artificial-turf stadium for football, soccer, baseball and softball. Bleachers line one side.

The track, which remains around the former football stadium, has been resurfaced and expanded from six to eight lanes. Football and soccer games will still be played on the back field, which will stay grass. The current dirt baseball and softball diamonds will also stay. “This helps us add to our facilities,” Mr. Hickson said.

He says the old stadium needed some major improvements. “Our track definitely needed to

# Two Seasons, Five Teams of Champions



During last school year 2017-18, Cheektowaga Central School District saw an unprecedented *five* athletic teams win championships in their divisions across two seasons.

During the fall season, the girls bowling team took sectionals and then won the New York State championship, becoming the first athletic team in District history to bring home a state championship. The varsity football team won its division, then went on to win sectionals and the Far West Regional championship. The Unified Bowling team, in only its second season, took home sectional honors.

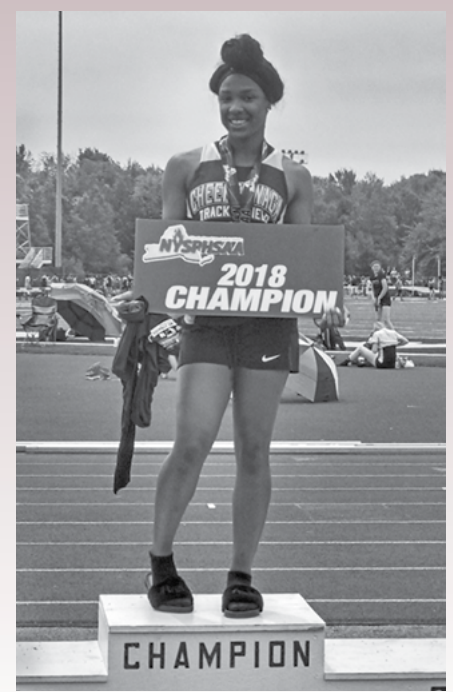
In the spring season, the boys indoor track team was named sectional small school champion, and the boys outdoor track team won the division.

## Congratulations to 2018 Central Retirees



Congratulations and best wishes to the Cheektowaga Central School District employees who retired in 2018. Diane Adamczyk, senior clerk typist, retired from her position in the Central Office. From Union East Elementary School, the retirees are teacher aides Nancy Kurek, Karen Stadelmeyer, and Christine Pilat, and teacher Catherine Gugliuzza. Art teacher Rosemary Ratajczyk retired from her position in the High School, and Lisa Kind retired from her position as a teacher in the Middle School. Teacher Julie Stuhlmiller retired from her position at the Middle School and Pine Hill.

## Moss is State Champion



Jayla Moss was named New York State Small School champion in the 100-meter dash at NYSPHSAA state competitions last spring as an 11th-grader.

## Gerald J. Hickson Stadium *continued from page 4*

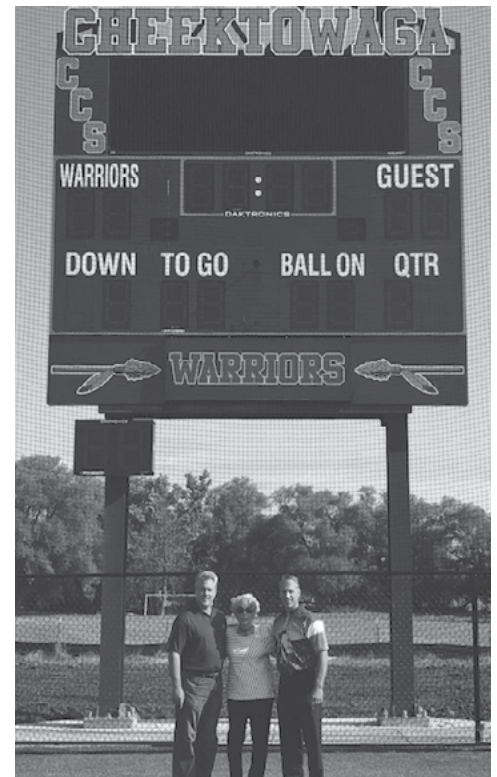


This photo shows a spectacular overhead view of Cheektowaga Central's new multipurpose, artificial-turf stadium for football, soccer, baseball and soccer.

be redone. We looked at our football field and soccer field. It's a tight area, in terms of yardage and footage. Other districts that have gone to larger areas, it's really been a game-changer."

"I'm really excited for the kids and our community. I'd like to thank all the athletes and the parents who have been a part of Cheektowaga Central through the years," he added, calling all prior years and successes "the foundation" of the new facility.

The Gerald J. Hickson Stadium will be formally dedicated on Sept. 7 when the varsity football Warriors play their season-opener at home against East Aurora. The game starts at 7 p.m.



Elaine Hickson, wife of the late Gerald J. Hickson, visited the site in early August as workers placed the stadium sign honoring her husband. Mrs. Hickson is shown here with their two sons, Jerry (left) and Brian (right). Not pictured are their daughter Cheryl and son David.

# Annual Reminders

## Statement of Compliance – Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 and Age Discrimination

The Cheektowaga Central School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, religion, creed, ethnic origin, marital status, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, disability or handicap, in the educational programs or activities it operates. This policy of non-discrimination includes the hiring and advancement of employees; salaries and other benefits; counseling services for students; student access to course offerings; educational programs (including technical education programs), athletics and other activities; and the business activities of the Board of Education. The coordinators of activities relating to compliance with Title IX and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended) at the Cheektowaga Central School District are Maureen George and Gretchen Sukdolak, who may be contacted at 3600 Union Road, Cheektowaga, NY 14225; phone (716) 686-3645.

## Detailed Budget Statement

The School District has copies of the current school year budget available in each school building throughout the school year. Also, budget information can be found online on the District website at [Cheektowagak12.org](http://Cheektowagak12.org). The budget for the following school year will be made available in each school building seven days prior to the budget hearing for the next school year.

### District Policies on website

Cheektowaga Central School District school and district policies can be found online on the District website:

[www.Cheektowagak12.org](http://www.Cheektowagak12.org)

## Alternate Transportation Request

### Before/After School Alternate Transportation Request

Parents in the Cheektowaga Central School District with children who need transportation to a daycare provider before or after school must notify the Transportation Office so proper arrangements can be made. This includes District students attending Union East Elementary School, Cheektowaga Middle School, or a private or charter school. The licensed daycare center or private babysitter's residence must be located within the boundaries of the District. The request must be consistent daily; requests for multiple pickups or drop-offs on different days will not be honored.



To make arrangements for a child to be transported by the District to or from a childcare provider, parents should complete an Alternate Transportation Request form. To obtain the form, call the Transportation Office at 686-3608, email [busing@ccsd-k12.net](mailto:busing@ccsd-k12.net), or download the form from the District website at [CheektowagaK12.org/domain/331](http://CheektowagaK12.org/domain/331). Mail or bring the completed form to the Transportation Office, Cheektowaga Central School District, 3600 Union Road, Cheektowaga, NY 14225; or fax to 681-5232; or email to [busing@ccsd-k12.net](mailto:busing@ccsd-k12.net). Please note: it takes up to five student attendance days after the form is received to finalize transportation arrangements.

## Gun-Free Schools

The Cheektowaga Central School District has adopted the following Gun-Free School Policy in accordance with state and federal laws:

- No student shall bring onto school premises or have in his or her possession on school premises any firearm as defined by federal law.
- Any student found guilty of bringing a firearm onto school premises or having such a firearm in his or her possession on school premises, after a hearing has been provided, may be suspended from school for a period of not less than one year.

## HIPAA and Its Application to the School Setting

HIPAA (the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act) is a federal law that imposes new standards for the protection of individual health information. The confidentiality and privacy of school health records that are part of the student's educational record are governed solely by FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act). The passage of HIPAA does not change that in any way. HIPAA does, however, affect the nature of the exchange of information from the student's health care provider to the school. Informal exchanges between health providers and school health staff are no longer permitted; explicit written authorization is required from the parent or guardian in order for information to flow to the school. For example, immunization records require such authorization.

Within the school setting, FERPA continues to govern the exchange of health care information that is contained in the student's educational record. It is not necessary to obtain a release of information from a parent or guardian in order to share such information with school staff for the purposes of insuring the best and most appropriate care for a student.



## Policy on Tobacco Use

The Cheektowaga Central School District's policy on the use of tobacco on school grounds is in accordance with the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the Pro-Children Act of 1994, and the New York State Clean Indoor Air Act. The District's policy states that tobacco use shall not be permitted and no person shall use tobacco on school grounds, in any district building, or in any vehicles used to transport students or staff.

# Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act – FERPA

The Cheektowaga Central School District is required by law to provide an annual reminder of the rights of parents and eligible students (18 years of age and older) concerning school records.

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), also known as the Buckley Amendment, parents and eligible students are guaranteed access to a student's school records. Copies are available to parents or eligible students upon request at a fixed cost.

Parents have the right to challenge the content of a school record. This right includes the right to a hearing to present evidence that the school record should be changed. The school is required to maintain the confidentiality of all pupil records. Under FERPA, school districts may disclose designated directory information if they have given notice and information to parents/guardians and adult students on how to opt out of this disclosure of data.

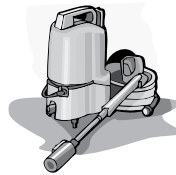
Finally, under FERPA, school districts may release the name, address and phone number of students to military recruiters unless parents/guardians opt out.

## Availability of the Asbestos Management Plan

Part 763.93(G)(4) of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations implementing the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1987 (AHERA) requires annual notification of parent and employee organizations of the availability of the district's asbestos management plan. The management plan identifies the location of asbestos-containing building materials, the condition and friability of the materials, and the response action to be taken. The management plan is on file in the administrative office of each school in the Cheektowaga Central School District, and in the Business Office. It will be made available for inspection within five (5) working days of receipt of a written request.

## Pesticide Notification

New York State Education Law Section 409-11 requires all public and non-public schools to provide notification to all persons in parental relation, faculty and staff about pesticide applications. The Cheektowaga Central School District currently uses integrated pest management practices and the least toxic approach to managing pests. Although we do not anticipate the application of a pesticide in any of our school buildings, we will place any interested person's name on a list for 48-hour prior notification of pesticide use, as required by New York State Education Law. To receive 48-hour notification of pesticide application, complete the accompanying form and fax it to 681-5232, or return it to Bruce Vona, Director of Facilities, Cheektowaga Central School District, 3600 Union Road, Cheektowaga, NY 14225.



### Cheektowaga Central School District

### Request for 48-Hour Notice of Pesticide Application

(please print clearly)

School Building: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Day telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Evening telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

# Annual Reminders

## A Message from Your School Nurse

The district's School Health Services program supports your student's academic success by promoting health in the school setting. One way that we provide care for your student is by performing the health screenings as mandated by the State of New York.

During this school year, the following screenings will be required or completed at school:

**Vision:** Distance/near acuity for all newly entering students, students in prekindergarten or kindergarten and students in grades 1, 3, 5, 7 and 11.

**Hearing:** Hearing screening for all newly entering students, students in prekindergarten or kindergarten, and students in grades 1, 3, 5, 7 and 11.

**Scoliosis:** Scoliosis (spinal curvature) screening for all girls in grades 5 and 7 and boys in grade 9.

**Health Appraisals:** a physical examination including body mass index and weight status category information is required for all newly entering students, students in prekindergarten or kindergarten, and grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11.

**Dental Certificates:** A dental certificate is requested for all newly entering students, students in prekindergarten or kindergarten, and students in grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11.

A letter will be sent home if there are any findings on the screening done at school that would cause concern or need medical follow-up. Please call your child's school health office if you have any questions or concerns.

High School: Mrs. Brock, RN  
phone 686-3628, fax 686-3633

Middle School: Mrs. Heerdt, RN  
phone 686-3657, fax 686-3669

Union East Elem.: Mrs. Krempa, RN  
phone 686-3623, fax 686-3666

**CHEEKTOWAGA CENTRAL SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

3600 Union Road  
Cheektowaga, NY 14225

Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 4164  
Buffalo, NY

<b><u>Cornerstone 1</u></b> Establish procedures that clarify expectations & enhance learning	<b><u>Vision</u></b> To inspire	<b><u>Cornerstone 2</u></b> Build meaningful relationships with staff, students and community to promote learning
<b><u>Priority 1</u></b> Utilize the four cornerstones to improve student learning	<b><u>Priority 2</u></b> Focus on the whole child	<b><u>Priority 3</u></b> Create opportunities for our students that incorporate 21st-century skills
<b><u>Cornerstone 3</u></b> Develop a culture of thinking & learning	<b><u>Mission</u></b> Inspire a high level of learning for all students	<b><u>Cornerstone 4</u></b> Motivate staff and students to do their best work & inspire the love of learning



**Board of Education**  
Renee M. Wilson, *President*  
Heather E. DuBard, *Vice President*  
Walter R. Burgett, *Trustee*  
Carol Kiripolsky, *Trustee*  
Thomas Raczka, *Trustee*  
Edward W. Schaefer, *Trustee*  
Matthew A. Weigand, *Trustee*

**Superintendent of Schools**  
Mary Morris  
*MMorris@ccsd-k12.net*  
**Newsletter Editors**  
Mary Morris, *Superintendent of Schools*  
*MMorris@ccsd-k12.net*  
Elizabeth Maeder, *Registrar*  
*EMaeder@ccsd-k12.net*



[www.cheektowagak12.org](http://www.cheektowagak12.org)



**District Offices**  
3600 Union Road  
Cheektowaga, NY 14225  
716.686.3606

**Registration Office**  
716.686.3665  
*EMaeder@ccsd-k12.net*

School Board meetings are generally held the second Tuesday of the month at the District Office, 3600 Union Road, Cheektowaga, at 7 p.m. Those planning on attending are encouraged to verify meeting date and time by calling 686-3606.

