

## Upcoming Events:

**Prism Concert:**  
Wednesday, April 5

**3<sup>rd</sup> Marking Period Report  
Cards (mailed home):**  
Thursday, April 13

**School is in session (Day of  
Attendance):**  
Friday, April 14 – All JSHS  
Students will be dismissed at  
11:30am

**Spring Recess:**  
Monday, April 17 – Friday, April  
21

**BOE Meetings Dates**  
Tuesday, April 11

Monday, April 24

## Welcome to our new monthly newsletter for the Cortland Junior Senior High School: April Edition

Happy Spring and welcome to our new monthly newsletter! This newsletter will be used for giving you, members of our school community, information on our students, staff, upcoming events, and the many successes we have throughout the year. We hope you like it and will send feedback or ideas to me about the types of information you would like see within this publication.

**What is going on in our classrooms?** Student engagement has been the major focus throughout the year, and we are working towards improving our instruction in order to meet all of our students' needs. We are defining an engaged student as one who links the task with a result or product that has meaning and value for the student. Moreover, we expect that engaged students will persist in the face of difficulty and will learn at high and profound levels.

Our teachers are working on improving their instructional practices by doing the following: Creating "I Can" statements for each class, taking data on each lesson to better improve their teaching from one day to the next, and asking questions at various degrees of difficulty in order help students remember and learn material better.

Staff are also reviewing their curriculum (what they teach) by identifying essential standards. They are creating common assessments and look at student work together in order to meet each student's specific need.

**Academic Help:** The Cortland JSHS school offers a variety of times for students to catch up on missed work, make up tests and quizzes, or get extra help throughout the day.

- *Math Help in the Morning!* Every day, from 7:15am until 7:45am, we have a certified math teacher in the Academic Center available for our students' Math needs.
- *Academic Tables:* The Cortland JSHS provides separate Academic Tables for the Junior High and High School. This program is designed to provide a place for your child to get a start on, and help with daily homework assignments. It is also designed to provide extended support so your child can get specific help on coursework. It runs Monday through Thursday afternoon from 3:00 to 4:00. Bus passes will be given to all students who wish to take the late bus home.
- *Activity Period:* Teachers are available every day after school from 2:30 until 3:00. During this time, students can see teachers for extra help, study, or make-up class work.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to our school!

Joseph Mack  
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## Junior High School News

### Team 3 English Class 2017 NASA Space Settlement Contest Project

Students in Stephanie Passeri-Densmore's Team 3 English classes just finished collaborating on the Team 3 annual project for the NASA Space Settlement Contest. This international competition is sponsored by the NASA Ames Research Center, the most advanced research and development section of NASA. The contest requires students in different age group categories to create permanent orbital space settlements that could be built in space and would be able to sustain themselves using only resources found on planets, moons, and asteroids of our solar system. The space settlements can be in one location or affiliated in multiple locations.

The project shows how settlements would thrive in space by using resources available from the Earth's moon and Near Earth asteroids, Mars and the Asteroid Belt, the moons of Jupiter and Saturn, and the planet Uranus. Models, related fiction, and computer drawing completed the projects.

While students used some internet sites provided by NASA, they also found information from university websites and non-governmental organizations, such as the National Space Society, the Mars Society, and PERMANENT.com. Hard copy sources included magazines, such as Popular Science, Popular Mechanics, and National Geographic.

The contest organizers impose a limit of one hundred pages per entry this year. Therefore, the students kept their compiled reports to a total of ninety-nine pages, collected in a three ring binder. Contest results will be made public in April. If the Team 3 students place in the top three for their age group, as has happened annually since 1999, Mrs. Passeri-Densmore intends to travel to St. Louis, Missouri, to display her students' project at the NASA/National Space Society International Conference in May.

### PBL project

In the classroom – Mr. Gambitta and Mrs. Martino combined classes for an interdisciplinary PBL project where students created a business, specifically a travel agency. They researched, created and planned a family vacation structured around visits to two national historical landmarks. To present their vacation trips, students created a multimedia Google Slides presentation which included images, videos, and text. Presentations were held in the LGI in front of the English and social studies classes.

### We have a winner!

Do you know which Asian country protects the endangered snow leopard in their Annapurna Conservation Area?

Daniel Lemon does, as he answered "Nepal" to win Cortland's local National Geographic Bee.

Daniel is an eighth grade student at Cortland Junior Senior High School (CJSHS). He won the CJSHS district-level Geography Bee on January 18. The National Geographic Bee is held in more than 11,000 schools around the U.S. and in the five U.S. territories.

Daniel edged out the runner-up, seventh grader Connor Tasselmyer, in the championship round. CJSHS students Michael Williams was the third place competitor and Joe Cataldo placed fourth. CJSHS students Boston Lockwood, Matt Honan, Caden Congdon, Justin Camp, Daniel Zhang, and Collin Bergene also all advanced into the finals of the competition.

After winning the CJSHS geographic bee, Daniel took a state qualifying exam. Daniel performed extremely well and scored in the top 100 in New York State. As a result of his awesome geographic knowledge, Daniel has advanced to the State Championship held on March 31 in Albany, N.Y. He will be competing against 99 other students from throughout New York State, all trying to advance to the National competition in Washington, D.C.

State champions will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C. to participate in the Bee national championship rounds on May 15 to 17. The first place national winner will receive a \$50,000 college scholarship, a lifetime membership in the Society, and a National Geographic Expeditions trip.

**Congratulations and good luck, Daniel!**

## Instructional Highlights: Math and Technology

Technology has been making its way into mathematics classrooms here at Cortland JSHS. Mr. Chambers has been using Google Classroom and class notes on iPads. At the 8th grade level, Team 4 has been piloting 1 to 1 computers and Mr. McNerney has been using Google Classrooms as well as WizerMe. Algebra 1A teachers, Mrs. Albright and Ms. Carpenter, use the app called *NearPod* to engage students in math activities and for formative assessments. Mrs. Valenti has been using videos from *emathinstruction.com* for Algebra 1R and Algebra 2A to reinforce instruction in the classroom.

- Girls in grades 6-9 are invited to full day of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Science) on Saturday, April 1 8:45am-3:30pm at Tompkins Cortland Community College. For more details and to register visit <http://tinyurl.com/TechSavvy17>
- The Coding Club meets every Monday after school in room 165 with Mr. Chambers and Mr. Robinson. Students learn coding and computer science using exercises on code.org. Over the past few weeks, the students have been making their own apps in *code.org's* app lab. This includes apps that make change, tip calculators, sound boards, and games. This is open to all interested students, no experience necessary.
- The mathematics website has some great student and parent resources available to assist with mathematics support <http://www.cortlandschools.org/teacherpage.cfm?teacher=890> for students in grades 7-12. You can find this link under the Cortland JSHS homepage, *directories* and then *mathematics*. There are math practice problems and videos. It lists all math teachers, their email addresses and links classroom websites if available.
- The academic center offers math support every morning in Academic Center (7:15-7:45 am) by Mrs. Brafman and help after school - Math Academic Tables take place on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 3-4pm. As June Regents approach, keep an eye out on the mathematics department website for Regents Review Calendars.

### Other Instructional News and Notes:

- As of 3/13 the High School Counselors have completed all of their classroom presentations for course selection for the next school year. Counselors will now be meeting all students individually to make final course selections and review college and career paths.
- Attention seniors: The scholarship page is updated daily, please be conscious of deadlines and follow directions carefully.
- *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*- airing on HBO April 22nd! The film will tell the true story of Henrietta Lacks, an African-American woman whose cells were used to create the first "immortal human cell line". Told through the eyes of her daughter, Deborah Lacks (Oprah Winfrey), the film chronicles her search to learn about the mother she never knew and to understand how the unauthorized harvesting of Lacks' cancerous cells in 1951 led to unprecedented medical breakthroughs, changing countless lives and the face of medicine forever. It's a story of medical arrogance and triumph, race, poverty and deep friendship between the unlikeliest of people.
- Last month, Senior High Health students learned how to perform Hands Only CPR. Our students now know what to do if they are called on to give CPR in an emergency, and they have the skills to be able to save the life of someone: a parent, sibling, relative or a friend.
- March was "Music in Our Schools" month. Students and staff were able to catch a concert every day of the month. Performances featured students from the Junior Senior High School.
- **Upcoming events:** April 12 - 21, regional Imagination Celebration at Center for the Arts, Homer. Reception 5:00 - 7:00 on April 12th.
- **Upcoming events:** The Physics Bus is coming for 2 days in April just before our spring break for Mr. Canestaro's physics classes and the 8th grade physical science students
- **Upcoming events:** April 7th is the field trip to the Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C. Students will not only be visiting the National Holocaust Museum but they will also have the opportunity to do some sightseeing at various monuments around the National Mall.

## School Wide Behavior Expectations

The Cortland JSHS has been communicating a new “Behavior Expectations Grid” to students during daily announcements. This behavior grid was created by the Student Advisory Council, which is made up of students from grades 7-12. The grid covers behavior expectations for all areas of the school including; Classrooms, Hallways, Bus/Transportation, Cafeteria/Outdoors, and Bathrooms/Locker-rooms. For each area of the school there are six messages that fall under the headings, **T**eamwork, **I**ntegrity, **G**oals, **E**mpathy, **R**esponsibility, and **S**afety. (notice the first letter of each word spells **TIGERS**) Each student was given a copy of the grid and all classrooms have a copy posted. Please join us in our efforts to teach our students beyond the classroom content. If you would like a copy for home use, it is available on our school website under the heading “*Helpful Links*”.

## Celebrations

**Class of 2017** - Meaghan Kendall named class Valedictorian **and** Zachery Osbeck named class Salutatorian

**Congratulations** to Matt Maniaci who won Gold Key award at the CNY art show for his segmented bowl and to Reilly Brown and Cameron Aldrich who did a wonderful job presenting 3 dimensional printing to the school board

**Blood Drive:** The goal of this year’s blood drive was to exceed the average donation amount of thirty-three. We collected forty-three donations on March 10th! Way to go Cortland!

### College/Career News:

Bailey Bradshaw - SUNY Cortland/Major: Pre-Law, Zache Fiene - SUNY Delhi/Major: Sports Management, Kristin Bush - Scranton & SUNY Geneseo —playing volleyball, Logan Chase - St. John Fisher College/Major: Sports Management/Playing soccer and lacrosse, Paige Potter - SUNY Cortland/Major: Business/Playing lacrosse, Ray Rogers - Ithaca College ROTC, Cameron Tinker - Army, Cody Wingard - Army, Mollie Walts - Wells College

**Congratulations:** The mock trial team concluded its season this past week with a narrow loss to defending state champion Fayetteville-Manlius in the regional quarterfinals. Nevertheless, congratulations go to lawyers Meaghan Kendall, John Conlon, Madison Van Patten, Zack Osbeck, Ella Wilson, and Daniel Ruggerio, and to witnesses Meredith Brafman, Tess Engst-Mansilla, and Julia Birdsall, Samantha Brafman, Taylor Parente, and Andy Ryan, for their hard work and accomplishments this season. With a number of talented and experienced returnees for next year, the future looks bright for the mock trial team.

**New York State Band Directors Association:** Jennifer Newman was accepted into this year’s NYSBDA (New York State Band Directors Association) honor band. This is a very select ensemble and only the best instrumentalists from all over NYS are selected to participate. Congratulations Jennifer!



## Attendance Matters

Teens who attend school regularly have stronger bonds to their school and are more likely to graduate. Good attendance also creates a habit that can carry over into work later. Consider these tips:

- Set expectations. Being out for even a day or two a month can hurt your child's performance. Tell him or her that the only acceptable excuses are illness, family emergencies, or pre-approved college visits.
- Discuss results. Point out that missing school means he or she will have to make up coursework. Students who fall behind may have to retake courses.
- Keep in contact. Write notes or call attendance lines for excused absences so the school knows your child is not skipping. If he or she does skip, contact the school so you can create a plan to get him or her back on track

## Athletics

For updated practice and game information go to our Athletic website:

<http://www.cortlandschools.org/teacherpage.cfm?teacher=1981>

**E-Mail Notification of Game Changes** - You can "Subscribe to team updates" in Schedule Galaxy and receive an e-mail every time there is a game change whether due to inclement weather or the need to reschedule a game for any reason. Sign up today for this great feature and be notified of all changes to a team's schedule. You can also sign up on the district's home page under the "District News - ED Emailer" for e-mail notifications from the Athletic Department or any school events, happenings, etc. What better way to stay informed and up to date with news from your child's school.

**Interested in playing a sport?** *Some important information you should know:* For any athlete intending to play a sport, it is necessary to complete and have on file in the nurse's office the following: Pre-Participation Evaluation Form, Health History Form and Concussion Management Form. You must also have a current physical (less than one year old) on file in order to obtain a stamped white card (emergency info card) that is required before any athlete plays a sport or participates in cheerleading. See the school nurse for all the necessary paperwork and to schedule a physical.

*List of physical dates:* **April 12, April 26, May 10, May 24, and June 14**

Note: To sign up to receive eNews communications from CECS, visit our website at [www.cortlandschools.org](http://www.cortlandschools.org).

Or receive via *Remind*, [visit the website](#)