

# CONNELLSVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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**Joseph A. Bradley**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

Falcons everywhere, as we begin to see the melting from another winter blast, it is evident that the 2018-2019 school year has been a very active one from a weather standpoint. Although we have had to utilize delays and cancellations, our students and teachers have all responded to the extent that precious little class time and learning have been impacted. The western PA weather sure does keep us on our toes. We look forward to an anticipated five day spring break, starting with the District being closed on April 18 and students returning to class on April 23. CASD will be tentatively holding our last day of school on June 4th and the CAHS commencement ceremony will be held June 7.

As we turn our attention from cancellations and delays toward longer days and improved weather, several events occur yearly to further confirm that indeed spring is upon us. Our outstanding performing arts programs churned out two great performances in *Les Miserables* and *The Addams Family*. Our spring athletic season is in full swing. All spring sports teams have had opportunities to practice both indoors and more preferably outside. The track, softball and boys tennis teams will have opened their seasons by March 28. Baseball will open their season March 29. Please come out and support those students.

A second annual sign of turning the corner is our academic cycle of standardized testing, which includes the PSSA – Pennsylvania System of School Assessment, PASA – Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment, and Keystone Exams. These tests will be administered over the next several weeks. The required testing grades and audiences are students in grades 3-8 and students completing Algebra I, literature (English 10 or English 11), and biology courses. As an educator, I find these assessments particularly useful as a source of data. The results help us to identify our strengths and weaknesses as a district. As a person that thrives on competition, the results of these assessments provide us with an opportunity to see how we compare to the other 499 school districts across the Commonwealth. As a parent, I realize these tests can be disruptive to the normal ebb and flow of your student's life and may cause stress. To alleviate some of that stress, thus hopefully allowing the students to perform to the best of their abilities, I offer these tips:

- Establish a consistent bedtime routine that ensures students are well rested.
- Encourage your student to eat breakfast daily - to that extent our very own CASD Food Service Department provides a well-balanced, nutritious, and in my humble opinion, tasty grab and go breakfast.
- Model exercise and physical activity – according to the article *Physical Fitness and Academic Achievement in Third- and Fifth-Grade Students* by Darla Castelli et al published in the 2007 edition of the *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, on pages 239-252, individuals who are physically active and fit perform better in school.

- Tell students that you are proud of them when they try their best. Regardless of whether the outcome is below basic, basic, proficient, or advanced, we want the best effort from our students.

Lastly, I thank the students and families of Connellsville for allowing me to serve them as their Superintendent for the 2018-2019 School Year. My family and I enjoy coming to Connellsville events and talking to all of the students and families that make us feel a part of the Connellsville Family. In the spirit of my ancestral roots, I wish all of you a belated Happy St. Patrick's Day. Please enjoy the time over the weekend of April 18 through April 22 to enjoy the company of your family.

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