**Career and Technical Education**

**AREA 8TH GRADERS EXPLORE CTE PROGRAMS**

Eighth grade students from all nine component districts visited the CTE center at MOBOCES this fall as part of the division’s annual visitation and exploration process.

During each visit, students heard a brief overview of CTE programs from Outreach Coordinator Rachel Helmer. They then toured the Rossetti building in small groups led by Criminal Justice students. In classrooms, they had an opportunity to talk with teachers and students about programs, curriculum and possible career pathways.

Some schools also sent their ninth grade students, who toured a handful of specific CTE programs they are interested in. The process, revamped to the current model several years ago, provides most students in the region with two to three opportunities to explore CTE options before deciding whether or not to enroll in a program as juniors.

**ADVISORY MEMBERS DISCUSS CTE CURRICULUM**

CTE held a Common Advisory Committee Meeting on December 7 to provide program instructors an opportunity to meet with business and industry and post-secondary representatives about their course design and curriculum. About 150 people attended the meeting, which is a critical component of the NYSED program approval process.

Teachers and advisory committee members discussed instruction, industry trends and innovations, technical assessments, college articulation agreements, work-based learning opportunities, employer needs and demands in specific fields, and the employability profiles that CTE creates for students.

These meetings offer regular opportunities for important conversations that can help shape CTE’s work. The committees will meet again in the spring.

**Early Childhood Education**

**PRE-K FAMILIES BUILD GINGERBREAD HOUSES**

Students in MOBOCES pre-kindergarten programs across the region worked on their annual gingerbread house projects throughout December. The family holiday tradition allows parents to come to school and help their children build edible houses using milk cartons, graham crackers, frosting and candy decorations.

The activity promotes parent involvement and allows the students to practice their colors, shapes, counting, motor skills and creativity in a fun, hands-on way. Pre-k students and family members from Canastota, Morrisville-Eaton, Oneida and Stockbridge Valley participated.

**Management Services**

**AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS BEGIN IN DISTRICTS**

Planning & Grant Writing Specialist Lisa Seitz secured a grant this summer to support afterschool programming in the Hamilton and Camden school districts. That program kicked off in Hamilton after Thanksgiving break.

More than 50 Hamilton students are participating in the program, which offers robotics and Spanish clubs four afternoons a week. Ten students are in the Lego Robotics group, 24 students are in the Lego Jr. group and 20 students are in the Hola! Espanol group.

Camden’s program begins this month and is expected to have nine program options for students.
Regional Information Center

**Educators Explore New LEGO Robotics Kits**

Six area educators attended a December 11 workshop on Lego Robotics with Model Schools Coordinator Laurie Yager. The “I Do, You Do, WeDO 2.0” workshop was designed for teachers of grades 2-4 and allowed them to explore the newest version of the WeDO kits. These kits include the Lego blocks, robotics pieces and a robust curriculum to help ignite students’ curiosity while enhancing their STEM and coding skills.

Participants were from Rome, Adirondack and Oneida BOCES.

**Workshop Addresses Relationship Building**

Nearly 50 educators from five districts attended a Capturing Kids’ Hearts workshop in December. The two-day training, led by Dr. Kate Cirillo from The Flippin Group, focuses on building relationships between teachers and students. Participants leave with strategies and ideas to better engage and connect with students, which can improve attendance, test scores, climate and leadership skills.

Participating educators were from Camden, Morrisville-Eaton, Rome, Stockbridge Valley and Vernon-Verona-Sherrill.

**Librarians Discuss New National Standards**

The School Library System hosted a recent workshop on “Prioritizing and Refocusing with the New National School Library Standards.” School librarians from the region spent an hour videoconferencing with Susan Ballard, a past president of the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and current member of the AASL’s Standards and Guidelines Editorial Board. SLS Coordinator Sue LeBlanc and Vernon-Verona-Sherrill High School Librarian Tina Laramie led the remainder of the workshop.

Participants discussed some the key changes to the National School Library Standards, how to apply them to their work and ways to prioritize inquiry and information literacy. Librarians from Camden, Canastota, Madison, MOBOCES, Oneida, Rome and VVS attended.

Staff and Curriculum Development

Alternative and Special Education

**Student Leaders Plan Holiday Spirit Week**

The Alternative Education High School Leadership Team planned a Holiday Spirit Week to help create a positive, engaging climate as students and staff prepared for winter break. Students planned themed days, encouraging their classmates to wear things like holiday socks and ugly sweaters on specific days during the week. On Friday before break, each classroom had holiday-themed projects and activities focused around acts of kindness. Some classes baked brownies and cookies for classmates, and others made and wrapped gifts for staff. In addition, the Leadership Team held a holiday party with K-3 students in the building, treating them to snacks, crafts and a Santa visit.

The Spirit Week is part of a year-long series of events Leadership students have developed to align with the regional Youth Summit theme of “Building Communities.”

Adult and Continuing Education

**BCES Hosts Healthcare Professionals Panel**

The BCES Consortium of Continuing Education hosted a Healthcare Professionals Panel on November 27 for students in its Health Occupations programs to learn more about working in the field. More than 70 students from the Practical Nursing, EKG Technician, Medical Assistant and Phlebotomy programs participated.

Employers from the Grand Rehabilitation and Nursing, Eastern Star Home, the American Red Cross, Presbyterian Home and Masonic Care Community shared information about different positions available at their facilities and answered broader questions about the local healthcare industry. Discussion topics included job openings, benefit packages, professionalism, technology in healthcare, the healthcare worker shortage, and the future of healthcare in the area. After the panel session, students and employers had an opportunity to network.

Educators explored new LEGO Robotics kits.