

STRAFFORD
LEARNING CENTER

HOW TO GET
IN TOUCH
WITH US:

• **Phone:**

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• **Staff:**

Amanda Bisnett, Special
Education Teacher and School
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tor

Charles Ott Academy

QUARTER 1, 2016-2017

Director's Welcome

Greetings!

The 2016-2017 school year has started stronger than we ever expected! We have welcomed back many students and are fortunate to have some new students join us. This year we have worked hard to expand our program offerings. Many in education are talking about student engagement. They want to discover the "secret" of what motivates students to learn and want to attend school. At COA and the ELO HUB we know that application is at the heart of engagement. When students get to "make stuff" and have that "stuff" do something, they are more likely to *like* school and want to come back. Project Based Learning

is at the core of this belief. This term we have had them shoot rockets, build podiums, shovel wood chips, design their own community service goals, create a Halloween party, and the list goes on! We have worked hard to build a positive community within our walls and share our passion with those around us through community service.

We believe that there are essentially three parts to a student's success. First- you must like your students. We *really* like our students! Each is unique and we miss them when they are absent. Second - learning must be fun and relevant. Learning must be assessed through real world situations. Learning about geometry in a text book isn't nearly as fun as going outside and figuring out the height of

the rocket you just built and launched! Third- *relationships, relationships, relationships*. These are precious and they allow us to move between and among the bad days that we all experience. We all have a bad day. But we are not defined by them. Treat each other with respect and the bad days will go away and in their place will be good days. We *cannot* help students unless we have good relationships with those invested in the student's success.

We look forward to finishing this semester strong. As always we cannot do it without your support. Our doors are open and you are welcome to come in and chat with myself or staff to get to know all the great things happening at COA and the ELO HUB.

-Paul



It's Rocket Science

This semester COA students have been busy learning about science and math through STEAM Rocketry, where they have had the opportunity to design and build projects related to rockets and rocket science. STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math. Through STEAM and project-based learning students get the opportunity to learn about math and science in a fun and interesting way. Throughout the quarter we worked on building water bottle rockets in which they had to also protect an egg. Starting

from scratch, the students were able to put their creativity and personal expression to work by using their own designs and ideas. They also helped to design and build a water bottle rocket launcher. Students used math and science during the project to help determine the best wing size for their rocket, how to make the rocket more streamline, and how much pressure was needed to make the rocket fly.

- Ms. Campbell



Winter is just around the corner...

The winter season can bring unexpected and quickly changing weather patterns. Please remind your students to dress appropriately for the weather.

SCHOOL CANCELATIONS:

Look or listen for "Strafford Learning Center" on your local news programs and radio stations.

If school in your sending district is cancelled, but not at Strafford Learning Center, your student's day is cancelled as well as there will be no transportation.

TWO HOUR DELAYS:

If you are in the MORNING session and you DO NOT attend the ELO Hub: Your day is cancelled.

If you are in the MORNING session and you DO attend the ELO Hub: You will be picked up exactly two hours after your regular pick up time and/or you should report to school by 10:15am.

If you are in the AFTERNOON session and you DO NOT attend the ELO Hub: Your day will proceed as normally scheduled.

If you are in the AFTERNOON session and you

DO attend the ELO Hub: You will be picked up exactly two hours after your regular pick up time and/or you should report to school by 10:15am.



How About Humanities?

This semester in Debate Camp we are exploring the duties and responsibilities of US citizens in our Civics course. The students have been studying historical perspectives in the founding of government, visiting Somersworth City Hall



to learn about voting, and writing and defending positions about some hot button issues like gun control, women's rights, and bullying. For the project-based learning component of our Debate class, we are building, sanding, and staining podiums. It is incredible to see how proud your student looks when they are standing at a podium they helped to build, delivering a speech they researched and wrote in preparation of Debate day.

Students are coming in dressed professionally and complimenting each other on their arguments. Although we are debating some tough issues, the students seem to be coming together as a community more than ever! I couldn't be more impressed with the students as they challenge themselves in public speaking and researching both sides of the issue. I appreciate their hard work! Go Team!

-Ms. Lipka



Community Here, Community There

Over the past year, students at the Charles Ott Academy have spent time and effort creating a community within our school walls through PBIS initiatives, community building projects, and "family" dinners and breakfasts. Staff members have already seen this year that students are more likely to help one another, teach one another and enjoy each other's company. Students have



worked together to come up with projects to improve the classroom and are often advocating for more time spent together exploring or experiencing things most high school students don't have the opportunity to do. Some students are known to arrive early or stay late, to spend time with teachers and peers.

Now that we have built a community amongst ourselves, COA staff members have challenged the students to spread their school community into their own communities. Through monthly community service initiatives, COA students

are creatively helping the people around them, taking leadership roles at projects or with project development and making connections between personal goals and service. In September, students participated in a Beach Clean Up Day where we gathered a surprising amount of trash along the NH Seacoast. In October, students shoveled, carted and spread the new woodchips in the JPS Playground.

I am so impressed with our team's work ethic and can't wait to see what other projects the students come up with for the remainder of the year.

- Amanda