

# NEWSLETTER

211



## JAMES B. CONANT HIGH SCHOOL

JULIE C. NOWAK PRINCIPAL

March 2018



**From the Principal:** We all are devastated and heartbroken by yet another school shooting. When tragic situations like this occur, it is understandable for parents to wonder if their children are safe in their own community, including school. As we keep the Parkland, FL community in our thoughts, I want to assure you that the safety of your children, our students, has always been and remains my top priority.

While we are shaken to our core when such tragedy occurs, I am certain that our school remains one of the safest places for our children. I know this because I have the privilege of experiencing what happens in our learning environment each day. I also know how we address safety concerns with a full investigation and appropriate response. While I cannot share every detail relative to school safety planning and response, I hope the following information about some of our security measures at Conant High School helps you have a better understanding of how we work to keep students safe. Along with the supports mentioned in the message from Superintendent Cates last week, below are some additional safety measures in place at Conant High School. Our focus is prevention and preparation.

- Each year, we meet with the local fire and police departments to review and update our school safety plan. All parties are active collaborators to ensure a thorough and comprehensive plan.
- At Conant High School, we have a full-time armed police officer on staff. Officer Stoy is in our hallways working with students each day. Research indicates this serves as one of the best deterrents for violence on a school campus.
- We have a staff of 18 student supervisors employed at Conant High School, many who are retired police officers and military personnel. They have excellent relationships with our students and are trained in crisis prevention and intervention techniques. Throughout the day, these staff members communicate with students, supervise our school's common areas, hallways, and entrances. All administrators, student supervisors and the police officer carry 2-way radios, so safety issues can be reported and addressed in real time.
- Routine entrance and restroom checks are performed every class period to secure exterior doors and ensure safe behavior in the restrooms.
- There are over 125 surveillance cameras in our hallways, common areas and parking lots.
- There are two approved school entrances for students. Both are staffed with student supervisors who check student IDs. Staff at the doors are very familiar with our students' names and faces. While students may remove their ID during the school day, no student is permitted to enter school without showing their ID or securing a temporary ID. All visitors must present an ID at the main entrance and are checked against a national database. All other doors are locked to the outside.
- We know having solid relationships and positive rapport with our students is critical to a safe school environment. I am extremely proud of our entire staff's dedication to our students. It is evident each and every day in our classrooms and hallways, as well as after school during extra-curricular events.
- Our team room model allows us to focus on individual students and their needs very well. Each week, teams meet to review students who are struggling academically, emotionally and/or behaviorally. Each team room has designated therapists who are extraordinary at supporting students as well as assessing students for safety and threat concerns.
- We conduct numerous safety drills during the school year, including two hard lockdown drills. We collaborate with first responders from the Hoffman Estates Police Department to plan, with each drill having a particular area of focus. Earlier this year, our focus was a student-initiated drill. The purpose of this was to train and empower students to call for a hard lockdown if they see evidence of an immediate threat. Parents are informed prior to the initiation of a hard lockdown drill so as not to cause concern that there is an emergency. For all lockdown drills, we are diligent in its implementation and in our consultation with experts.
- We have excellent working relationships with local mental health care providers, among them, Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital and Kenneth Young Center. We work together to support positive mental health systems for our students.
- School employees are mandated reporters of abuse or other safety concerns with students. Staff reports all concerns of abuse to the Department of Children and Family

Services. As required by law, and in certain circumstances, students are reported to a database maintained by the Illinois State Police.

- When provided medical releases, we work with therapists to support the best possible educational supports for students who require private therapy.
- There is a Safety Concern button located on the right-hand side of our website (<https://chs.d211.org>) to report concerns about student safety. This form can be completed anonymously. This button is also a standard feature on each student's iPad.
- Safety reviews are a weekly agenda item for our Administrative Team meetings, which include the school's police resource officer. During this time, we review timely topics and our practices relative to school safety.
- The Principal's Newsletter often includes an article regarding a health or safety matter. Please look to the next edition of the Principal's Newsletter to learn more about vaping, which is an issue in our school community.
- Often, announcements at home games include safety reminders for parents and students. The information in these announcements is purposeful with regard to the time of year. The information presented is based on data we have collected within our school community.

There are many ways parents can help our school community to be as safe as possible. Parents can help by becoming involved in our school community. This includes reading the monthly Principal's Newsletter, attending school events, including Principal-Parent Network meetings, and joining the Conant High School Boosters who meet each month.

In the last few weeks, many parents have reached out with expressions of care and support for all students and wanting to assist in making our school community as safe as possible. Parents have also expressed wanting to learn more about security measures at Conant. In order to offer parents helpful information, I have scheduled a Principal Parent Network meeting for Monday, March 12, at 7:00 p.m. in the Media Center at James B. Conant High School. At this meeting, our administrative team will review many of our security measures to help you have a better understanding of how we work to keep students safe. This meeting is scheduled in lieu of the Principal Parent Network meeting scheduled for Thursday, April 24. All parents are welcome to attend.

Parents can assist us to keep our school safe by reporting matters of concern to an administrator either directly or by using the anonymous safety concern link available on our school website. Parents should encourage their children to report concerning behaviors as well. Please know that anonymous concerns are much more difficult to address and they do not offer administrators the opportunity to fully investigate, communicate, and at times, clarify misinformation. We encourage parents to contact us and share concerns when they arise.

We rely on parents to help us to discourage bullying behaviors, the spreading of rumors, as well as closely monitor their child's social media. Bullying behaviors can be much more subtle in adolescence than when children are younger. Bullying behaviors include socially isolating students and sharing inappropriate memes and messages about students via social media.

Finally, parents are encouraged to reach out if they have concerns about their own children's social and emotional struggles. It is important that we support those who are experiencing depression or demonstrating other mental health needs, and that these individuals will seek support and not isolate themselves out of fear of being marginalized.

It is understandable to have questions when it comes to speaking to your own child about a crisis. Quality resources include those prepared by the National Association of School Psychologists ([clickable links](#)):

- *Crisis: Helping Children Cope with Grief and Loss*
- *Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers*

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie C. Nowak". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Julie C. Nowak  
Principal

# dates to remember

THR	3/01	JAZZ BAND CONCERT 7:00PM MEDIA CENTER
FRI	3/02	SPIRIT WEAR SALES 10:00AM-1:30PM COUGARS' CORNER
FRI	3/02	SPRING PLAY 7:00PM AUDITORIUM
SAT	3/03	SPRING PLAY 2:00PM & 7:00PM AUDITORIUM
MON	3/05	WINTER SPORTS AWARDS 7:00PM GYMNASIUM
TUE	3/06	MORNING WORK SESSION CLASSES BEGIN AT 9:35AM
TUE	3/06	ORCHESTRA CONCERTO CONCERT 7:00PM AUDITORIUM
THR	3/08	BAND SHOWCASE CONCERT 7:30PM AUDITORIUM
FRI	3/09	BLOOD DRIVE 7:30AM-3:00PM ATRIUM
FRI	3/09	MR. COUGAR CONTEST 7:30PM AUDITORIUM
SAT	3/10	OPERATION SNOWBALL 7:00AM-11:00PM SCHAUMBURG HS
SAT	3/10	SAT TESTING 8:00AM 2ND FLOOR CLASSROOMS
SAT	3/10	IMPROV PERFORMANCE 7:00PM CAFETERIA
MON	3/12	BAND PARENT MEETING 6:30PM A160
MON	3/12	PRINCIPAL-PARENT NETWORK MEETING 7:00PM MEDIA CENTER
TUE	3/13	CONANT BOOSTERS MEETING 7:00PM MEDIA CENTER
FRI	3/16	PROM FASHION SHOW 10:05AM-1:40PM AUDITORIUM
FRI	3/16	SPIRIT WEAR SALES 10:00AM-1:30PM COUGARS' CORNER
FRI	3/16	ART EXPO 10:05AM-1:40PM ATRIUM
FRI	3/16	ORCHESIS SHOW 8:00PM AUDITORIUM
SAT	3/17	DISTRICT 211 HONORS CHOIR CONCERT 3:00PM AUDITORIUM
SAT	3/17	ORCHESIS SHOW 8:00PM AUDITORIUM
TUE	3/20	MORNING WORK SESSION CLASSES BEGIN AT 9:35AM
FRI	3/23	SPRING BREAK BEGINS AT CLOSE OF SCHOOL

## COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAM AND DISTRICT-WIDE TESTING IN APRIL

The College Board's Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) is administered as the state assessment in Illinois high schools. All juniors at Conant High School will take the SAT (with essay) on Tuesday, April 10th. The SAT is required for receipt of a regular high school diploma and serves as a college entrance exam.

While the juniors participate in the SAT, the PSAT 10 will be administered to all sophomore students. The PSAT 10 is used as an indicator for areas that need to be strengthened prior to the State-required junior year assessment.

Regular classes will not be in session on April 10th. Freshmen and seniors will be excused from school that day.

On April 3rd, during a regular school day, all freshmen will take the PSAT 8/9. The PSAT 8/9 is the first in the SAT assessment suite. Students will be excused from class to complete the assessment.

More detailed, class-specific information will be mailed home in the near future.

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### SENIOR FINAL EXAM EXEMPTIONS

Seniors may qualify for an exemption from their last semester final examination in a course if the student: has at least a "C" average in the course; has fewer than six absences from the class; has never been truant from the class; has never been suspended from the class; and is not incomplete on assignments required by the teacher of that class. Students always have the option to take their final exams. Seniors who are not exempt from last semester final examinations will take their examinations at the regularly scheduled times for semester examinations. Questions regarding senior final exam exemptions can be directed to your senior's administrator.

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### CLASS OF 2022 PARENT INFORMATION

All incoming ninth grade students are required by the state of Illinois to have a physical examination and their current immunizations on file in the health office. Physical examinations must be completed on the Certificate of Child Health Examination form version dated 11/2015 or later. These forms are available on the school's website under the health services tab. Examinations that are not completed on this form or completed on IHSA forms will NOT be accepted to meet the requirement of your child's ninth grade physical.

If your child is planning to register for a summer sports camp, a physical must be on file in the high school health office prior to the first day of camp. Your child's physical must have been completed within the last 13 months for your child to participate. Please send a copy of that physical to the health office after March 30, 2018. Records will not be received from the junior highs prior to the start of summer sports camps. It is the responsibility of the parents to make sure there is a physical on file in the health office prior to the first day of sports camp.

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### CLASS OF 2019 IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENT FOR 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR

Beginning the school year 2015-2016 any child entering the 12th grade is required to show proof of receiving two doses of the meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV). The first dose shall be received on or after the child's 11th birthday. The second dose should be administered on or after your child's 16th birthday. An interval of at least eight weeks after the first dose. Only one dose is required if the first dose was received at 16 years of age or older. Your child's registration will not be able to be completed and a schedule will not be issued until this immunization requirement is met. Please note the meningococcal B vaccine does not meet the school requirement. If your child does not receive their immunizations for religious reasons, a state approved exemption form must be submitted to the nurse's office prior to completing your child's registration process as this is a new immunization requirement. If your child does not receive immunizations for medical reasons, a note from your physician is required and must be submitted to the nurse's office prior to completing your child's registration process. If you have any questions please feel free to contact the health services office at 847-755-3662.

**Did you know...** Conant High School has a food pantry that serves our Cougars In Need? Conant High School participates in the Blessings in a Backpacks Program and also maintains a food pantry for families in need. Pantry needs will be listed in the newsletter on a regular basis.

**CHS Food Pantry Needs...** Slim Jims, microwave popcorn, pop-tarts, healthy chips, trail mix, mini-muffins, fruit snacks, breakfast bars, Nutella to go, toiletries and personal items. Frozen foods (if you bring these items in, please bring to the attention of the front office) such as uncrustables, hot pockets, and individually wrapped pizzas. Thank you!

## DISTRICT 211 TO HOST CAREER EXPO

High School District 211 will host a Career Expo on April 4, 2018, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at Palatine High School. The Expo will feature a variety of local businesses and will focus on four areas: internships, career exploration, apprenticeships, and jobs.

Students wishing to attend this year's Expo are encouraged to have their resume prepared, dress professionally, and practice their elevator pitch. For more information, students should speak with Reiko Behlke, High School career advisor.

Businesses interested in participating in the expo can go to <https://tinyurl.com/D211CareerExpo> to reserve a table and have their company added to the evening's program. For those interested in offering students an internship or apprenticeship, go to <https://tinyurl.com/internshiphost>. Information about the District's internship program can be found at <https://adc.d211.org/district-internship-program>.

## RECOGNITIONS

The Co-Ed Cheerleading Team won the MSL Conference Championships, 2nd at IHSA Sectionals and finished in 12th place in the state finals.

The wrestling team finished in 3rd place at the MSL Conference Tournament and 1st place at the IHSA Regional with 6 champions: Alex Giuliano, Jeremy Conroy, Filippo DeFrenza, Nicky Amato, Cormac Kane, Brayden Cosgrove & 4 qualifiers: Tommy Santangelo, Joey Perez, Ed Gosche & Mason Sykes.

Girls Bowling finished in 4th place at the MSL Conference Tournament and 5th place at the IHSA Regional with Elizabeth White, Jemma Skweres & Sophie Hyland qualifying for the IHSA Sectional.

Girls Gymnastics won the IHSA Regional with an impressive team effort. Kennedy O'Connor finished 1st on the all-around, Bailey Bloom 1st and Julia Betts 3rd on the Floor.

The Boys Swim Team finished in 6th place at the Cougar Classic.

Students named to Technology Center of DuPage's A-Team for Cosmetology for the first semester - Mckayla Cunningham-Poole, Lisa Reedy, Karla Rosales, and Anna Scheff.

Congratulations to special education teacher, Ms. Camille Lutz, who was recognized by Get Schooled Gives Back for her hard work and great efforts in helping students succeed.

Karla Modelski was honored as an Outstanding Activity Advisor by the Illinois Directors of Student Activities.

## SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!

Attention graduating Conant seniors! D211 Foundation Scholarships are available. Most applications are due mid-March. To assist in college endeavors, students are encouraged to visit the Foundation's scholarship page, <http://www.d211foundation.org/james-b-conant-high-school-scholarships> to review school specific and district wide scholarships.



If you require assistance while visiting our school, please contact the assistant principal's office at (847) 755-3612.

## OPERATION SNOWBALL

The 2018 D211 Operation Snowball retreat will be held at Schaumburg High School on Saturday, March 10th from 6:30am – 11:00pm. All Conant students are invited to participate, and students wanting to participate can complete the online registration link on the Conant website. Space is limited to the first 100 Conant students who complete the online registration form and pay the \$30 registration fee in the main office. For more information, please contact Rick Bauer, CHS counselor and Operation Snowball advisor.

## WINTER SPORTS AWARDS

All winter athletes and their parents are invited to attend the Winter Sports Awards Night on Monday, March 5th at 7:00 p.m. Please meet in the main gym for a brief presentation. Immediately afterwards, each sport will proceed to their own area for their individual awards. Refreshments will be provided by the Conant Booster Club outside the gym area.

## CONANT HS VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION

*The high school years go by so quickly. Don't miss an opportunity to get involved!*

Thank you to all who have volunteered for the many Conant Boosters parent led volunteer organization sponsored activities that have already taken place this school year. We continue to seek fellow Conant parents to help in making a difference at our school. It is never too late during the school year to get involved at a level that is comfortable for you. Every school year over a dozen volunteer run committees need your willingness to share your time and talent so that we together can continue to support our students and staff and Conant community.

Nominations from Conant parents are needed for 2018-19 school year Conant Boosters Board Officers. Submit the 2018-19 BOARD OFFICERS NOMINATION FORM which can be downloaded at [www.conantboosters.com](http://www.conantboosters.com) no later than Friday, March 9 with your nominations for President, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary and/or Corresponding Secretary. The Nomination Form has a description of responsibilities of each office. All nominations will be considered by the Nominating Committee who will put forth a slate of candidates for acceptance at the April 10 Parent Meeting which will stand for election at the May 8 Parent Meeting.

Conant Boosters awards nine \$1,000 scholarships and two \$1,200 scholarships to deserving seniors wishing to further their education. Scholarship packets are available in Room 102 or can be downloaded at [www.conantboosters.com](http://www.conantboosters.com). Completed scholarship applications are due to Mrs. Russmann in Room 102 no later than Friday, March 9.

Learn how to get involved by attending the 2017-18 Parent Meetings. During these meetings Principal Nowak and Board Officers and Committee Chairs share and discuss updates regarding matters concerning our school along with volunteer opportunities.

**The next monthly Parent Meeting is Tuesday, March 13 at 7:00 pm in the Media Center.**

*Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does. ~ William James*

## GO COUGARS!

Beata Candre, Conant High School Boosters President  
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Visit us at [www.conantboosters.com](http://www.conantboosters.com)

Contact us at [conantboosters@gmail.com](mailto:conantboosters@gmail.com)

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For individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, please access the following TTD/TTY telephone number: (847) 755-3654.