

Welcome Letter from Executive Director

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year, which marks our 18th year serving students and families through personalized education! We welcome all new and returning families of our three schools: Connecting Waters (Waterford or School 1), Connecting Waters East Bay (Union City or School 2), and Connecting Waters Central Valley (Modesto or School 3). Our first day of school is Friday, August 16th. Make sure you are ready to go with assignments to complete.

Our priorities for this year include:

1. Strengthen personalization for each student by:
 1. Daily engaging our students during required school minutes
 2. Curriculum training for parents and staff
 3. Every student reading by 2nd grade
 4. Strengthening writing skills
 5. Use of local data to increase student proficiency
2. Increase our CAASPP scores by:
 1. Daily practice
 2. "Grasp the CAASPP"
 3. Resource Center classes
3. Use social media to tell our story to enhance personalized learning
4. As mandated, provide health education: [CWCS Health Education Policy](#)
5. Provide the breakfast meal as mandated to students who qualify for a free or reduced-priced meal (to eligible students who are scheduled for educational activities lasting two or more hours at the school site, resource center, or meeting space).
6. Strategic Plan through our WASC and LCAP Goals:
LCAP/WASC Goals
 1. Increase the percentage of students who are on-track to graduate college and career ready
 2. Close the achievement gap in the low performing students in English and Math
 3. Increase the percentage of EL students who achieve proficiency in English Language Arts and Math
7. Community Outreach to foster positive relationships

Be sure to read your [2019-2020 Parent Student Handbook](#) given to you by your ES (this important document may also be found online). The handbook provides you with all the vital information you need to know about our school, so please read it from cover to cover. Your Education Specialist (ES) or credentialed teacher will navigate you through your personalized journey in Connecting Waters Charter Schools. Along with your Education Specialist, there is a team of educators who are here to assist and guide you and your Education Specialist. We believe that the school staff, parents and students form a partnership to ensure your student(s) receive an excellent educational experience!

As many of you may know, there was a network of charter schools in southern California that are accused of stealing more than \$50M from the state by collecting funds for students who were not enrolled in their schools. This news has definitely added to the negativity, which, along

with bad press, has heightened the scrutiny of charter schools like ours. We have already noticed increased accountability measures as a result of what these charter schools have done. There will be more scrutiny as to how funds are spent among charter schools, especially independent charter schools such as ours.

Aside from this, there are new laws that we have to make sure we come in line with; a few of them are mentioned above. You can be confident that Connecting Waters Charter Schools with its longevity and the experience among our staff, continues to provide and run fiscally and educationally sound schools.

One of the state changes involves our Small Group Instructors (SGIs), Vendor Instructors and Classes. Each school is required to report to the state those who are providing instruction to our students and show that they are properly credentialed for our core classes. "Core" classes are reading/English, math, social studies, and science.

For those who are new to Connecting Waters Charter Schools, here are definitions of the above terms. Small Group Instructors are employees of CWCS. Vendors are independent contractors who are partners of CWCS, and Tutors can be SGIs or Vendors.

You will notice that we have added this year the term "work group or workshop." A work group can be led by an SGI or Vendor. The vendor or SGI provides a support role only (no new instruction or learning is provided), and does not need the appropriate CA credential, and therefore is not in control of the course. There is no homework, no syllabus, and no grade provided, unless given by the ES or Department Teacher or Effective Educator (EE). The ES or EE is the teacher of record and must provide oversight. (Note: Tutoring is one-on-one. A work group is more than one student.)

Class requirements apply to all grades, TK-12. Core classes can only be taught by an appropriately authorized CA credentialed teacher. A class is teacher-led and the grade is provided by the teacher.

How does this apply to Online Instruction?

Online Vendor Tutors - These may be used as support/supplemental. Tutors do not need an appropriate CA credential.

Online Vendor Classes - These online classes must be reported to the state. If the class is teacher-led, it must be taught by an appropriately authorized CA credentialed teacher. If the online course is non teacher-led, a credential is not needed.

Here are some examples:

Online vendor classes teacher-led – approved for use

- Apex Learning ALVS (with their teacher)
- UC Scout - all teacher-led courses are okay except for AP Computer Science

Online vendors non teacher-led (also known as learner-led) – approved for use

- Apex Learning CTV (no teacher, non teacher-led, learner-led) - course list grade 6 through 12, for general credit only

- K12, Inc - may continue to be purchased as learner-led core curriculum for K-8, 9-12; teacher-led courses need to have CA credentialed teachers and will be verified through k12 and k12 rep
- Odysseyware (learner-led) - This is an online curriculum, under the direction of the ES.

After receiving your thoughtful, caring email and calls sharing the concerns of the changes that CTC (Commission on Teacher Credentialing) and the state are imposing on all public schools. We have begun our emails and calls to those imposing these changes. It is evident that these legislative changes are causing a huge impact and are not favorable to personalized charters like ours.

Some of you have wondered why other charter schools are not aware or interpreting these changes in the same way as CWCS. We do want you to know that we have been grappling with these potential changes for months to see what the outcome would be. We sought out the council of top charter school organizational leaders on this topic and their interpretation was the same as ours.

We have an amazing team of professionals who sit on county committees and keep up on the latest changes that may affect our students. We want to thank Mary Halter for opening up the conversation with CTC and sharing some of the inconsistencies of CTC's path and the UC System. Mary has gotten their attention and they are thinking. We also see that BYU is also reaching out to CTC and the state. We feel these are all good signs and can provide us time to pause and continue to work with our online vendors to come in line with these changes. We hope CTC will change their position but in the meantime, will continue to work with each of our online and site vendors to become compliant this school year. Please be patient as Business Services is working to reinstate online vendor accounts and reset any previous cancelled order(s). The ESs will be notified once this is completed by Business Services.

Your ES is your first line of contact and your guide to navigate you through any changes each year. However, feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions as the year progresses. We want to acknowledge and thank each of our board members for all of their tireless support and guidance to all of our schools: Robert Avila, Summer Hash, Jennifer Louie-Monzon, Laneshia Peters, Jeana Sears, Megan Shipley, and Nina Vieira who have each committed to serving the school to maintain its mission and fiscal integrity. Read more about each of our board members.

Please plan to attend our Back to School Parent Training in Union City on Monday, August 26 and in Modesto Friday, September 6 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Join us for our Back to School Celebration and learn some cool stuff too. Topics include: Organizational Tips, Website Navigation, Curriculum, CAASPP Tips/Tricks, and more! East Bay Area will have a Vendor and Community College showcase as well from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Please encourage your families to attend! Child care is available. Parents from any CWCS school can attend either event.

DATE: Monday, August 26, 2019
TIME: 9:00 am to 1:30 pm
LOCATION: East Bay Area
OLR Gymnasium 703 C Street, Union City, CA 94587

AND

DATE: Friday, September 6, 2019
TIME: 9:00 am to 11:00 am
LOCATION: Modesto Area
Clarion Hotel 1612 Sisk Rd, Modesto, CA 95350

Join us for this parent training to kick off the new year. Materials and light refreshments will be provided. Mark your calendar now! More details to follow.

CONTACTS: Shoni Johnson, Curriculum & Assessment Director sjohnson@cwcharter.org; & Bev Harris, Parent Support/ Resource Center Coordinator bharris@cwcharter.org



Curriculum and Assessment Department News

Welcome back! I hope everyone had a relaxing and restful summer. Over the summer I took time to organize for the new school year...I cleaned closets, set goals, and made a priority list. Taking time to prepare and plan beforehand often helps the year begin smoothly and feels less stressful. As you begin planning for your new year, here are some things you may want to consider...

- **What materials will work best with your student?**
 - See an overview and list of recommended curriculum here:
Main school webpage>>Departments>>Curriculum>>Recommended Curriculum
- **What are your students' grade level standards this year?**
 - See a list of all state standards here:
Main school webpage>>Departments>>Curriculum>>State Standards
- **What additional instructional support can you use?**
 - Check out our course offerings here:
Main school webpage>>Department Classes (*scroll down to Quicklinks to find*)

- **How should you pace your curriculum to ensure completion by the end of the year?**
 - Pacing and planning are important to ensure your student gets through all of the topics and standards for his/her grade level. For more information about how to align your curriculum to standards and create a pacing guide, speak with your ES or email me for a meeting.
- **What materials should you supplement your curriculum with to ensure you have met all the grade level standards?**
 - We have great suggestions for supplemental materials on our Recommended Curriculum Page. Your ES can also provide suggestions for supplemental curriculum along with instructions on how to use the materials. If you are new to our school, you may have received some supplemental curriculum from your Intake appointment.
 - Also check out our Approved Intensive Instruction options and classes for struggling students:
Main school webpage>>Departments>>RTI>> RTI Tier 3 Approved Option Program Descriptions
- **What academic goals and expectations will you and your student set for the year?**

Perhaps you are simply asking yourself, "Where do I begin?" Please feel free to contact me if you would like to set up an appointment. Together, we can discuss your student's needs, brainstorm ideas and solutions, find curriculum, and develop a plan to ensure your student's success.

The beginning of the school year is also the opportune time to try new curriculum and decide what is working for you and what is not, so adjustments can be made. Many parents find using curriculum programs that are state-adopted and used in traditional schools makes planning time easier. State-adopted textbooks include all grade-level standards and complete pacing guides within the program, and therefore eliminate the "guess work" of ensuring that content standards are met. All state-adopted programs include numerous project ideas and activities as well as supplemental support materials that can make learning fun.

Our Curriculum Department has information about suggested curriculum, standards, blueprints, sample pacing schedules, educational approaches and more! Feel free to browse around: Main school webpage>>Departments>>Curriculum

State Testing Get your fingers ready... Typing Program Recommendations

All students need to be able to type with fluency by grade 3. As we saw on the state exam (CAASPP), students who were fluent in typing skills were less frustrated when

asked to type short response answers in ELA and Math. Students should begin keyboarding skills as early as 2nd grade. There are some excellent and affordable (FREE) keyboarding programs available. Here are some recommendations:

[Typing Club](#)

[Power Typing](#)

[Good Typing](#)

You can find additional typing program recommendations, including typing games for younger students, on our Curriculum Website under “Computer Skills and Typing”:

Main school webpage>>Departments>>Curriculum>>Curriculum

Resources>>Computer Skills and Typing

Speaking of the state exam, it’s never too early to start thinking about preparing your student for the spring CAASPP assessment! All students in grades 3-8 and Grade 11 will complete the CAASPP in March or April. This is not an assessment you can study the “night before” for. The CAASPP assesses students in critical thinking, deep understanding of concepts and application of concepts.

Take some time to check out our Assessment Page with resources to support your student, including online practice tests found under the CAASPP page:

Main school webpage>>Departments>>Assessment>> California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)>> CAASPP Practice

Transitional Kindergarten

We want to welcome our Transitional Kindergarten students! If you are a parent of a Transitional Kindergarten student and looking for some support curriculum, please check out these great resources:

Main school webpage>>Departments>>Curriculum>>Curriculum

Resources>>Transitional Curriculum

High School Intensive Updates

We are excited to announce changes to the High School Intensive Program! Our new and improved High School Intensive Program was driven by parent, student and teacher feedback. Our High School Intensive Program is designed to provide additional support in math and English to 10-11th graders who need it. Courses will now be aligned with core credit for math and English to help students stay on-track to graduate and coursework is asynchronous to allow more flexibility and personalized schedules. Courses include a hybrid of digital interactive lessons and print materials. Courses are designed to support students needing help passing Algebra I and to help increase writing skills. Your ES will speak to you if your student has been identified as someone who will benefit from this program. If you have questions, you may contact hsintensive@cwcharter.org.

Successful Programs Return!

We are proud to announce these invaluable programs will be returning this year. Please contact your ES if you are interested in signing up in any of the below programs.

Developmental Reading and Math Classes:

Does your student struggle to decode and/or comprehend what he or she reads? Struggling students may benefit from Corrective Reading. We are offering this program, which has proven to be very successful with our students, for the 8th year in a row.

Corrective Reading provides intensive direct instruction-based reading intervention for students in Grades 3–Adult who are reading below grade level. This Direct Instruction reading intervention program delivers tightly sequenced, carefully planned lessons that give struggling students the structure and practice necessary to become skilled, fluent readers and better learners.

Does your student struggle with math? Perhaps he or she just needs a little help on certain concepts like math facts, fractions, or solving for unknowns... whatever the struggle, we are here to help! Your student may benefit from a supplemental Developmental Math class in addition to his or her current math program. This program has also proven to be very successful with our students for the last 6 years.

Accurately diagnose and provide differentiated mathematics instruction and practice. The **CAMS®**, **STAMS®**, & **STAMS Solve Book Collection** focuses specifically on the foundational math skills students need to master to move on to the next grade level and perform well on state mathematics tests. This powerful program will give your students a solid mathematics foundation and ensure they have the tools they need to become independent problem solvers.

Students attend classes online via our Elluminate web-based classroom with our

credentialed instructors **four days per week** for the Developmental Reading and/or Math classes. If you are interested in signing your student up or curious to see if he or she can benefit from these programs, please talk to your ES about how you can administer the Placement Exams or visit our RtI Program page for more information. Main school webpage>>Departments>>RTI

Have a wonderful year, and please do not hesitate to contact me, Shoni Johnson, Curriculum and Assessment Director, at sjohnson@cwcharter.org or at 800.808.9895 x 252 to discuss any curriculum needs you may have.



Local Control Advisory Committee

Parents, Students & Staff Needed!

We are in need of parent volunteers to serve on the Local Control Advisory Committee. It is vital we fill these positions! The Local Control Advisory Committee's responsibility is to advise the Administration and the Board about supporting the CWCS Local Control Accountability Planning (LCAP) for all CWCS Schools with resources for our students using our Supplemental Grant funding. Members will serve a 1 year term and will be selected to reflect the diversity of the community and the student body. We are seeking a minimum of seven (7) community members. Parents of English Learner, socio-economically disadvantaged and foster youth students are highly encouraged to participate. All students are encouraged to join and let their voices be heard! Members are asked to attend three (3) teleconference meetings (approximately one hour each). Meeting dates for 2019-20 are: 11/13/19, 2/12/20, and 5/6/20 from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Your input is extremely important in helping CWCS schools with budget planning in regards to supporting our schoolwide goals.

To apply for this important position, please complete the [following survey](#). ESs who have children enrolled in a CWCS school are also encouraged to apply. Thank you, in advance, for supporting your school!

[Survey](#)

Visit our website for [Information on LCAP](#).

Questions? Contact Shoni Johnson, Curriculum & Assessment Director and LCAP/WASC Accountability Coordinator at sjohnson@cwcharter.org.

K-12

Connecting Waters Charter Schools is providing its or are providing their enrolled students in all grades the option of selecting the award-winning *learner-led* K12 Inc.

curriculum. We have chosen to offer K12 because of the richness and depth of the content, the alignment to standards, and the ease of use it offers students and parents. The K12 curriculum was developed by some of the finest education minds in the country-- including a Nobel Prize Laureate. The K12 curriculum is based on proven learning methods, the latest research, and traditional academic content. The curriculum is designed to meet or exceed state academic standards. K12 is a great option for students here at Connecting Waters because you do not need to order every subject. As a CW student, your instructional funds are flexible and may be used in any way that your ES and you agree is appropriate. So, one subject, two, or more--the choice is yours!

Materials

K12 provides instructional materials including textbooks, workbooks, math manipulatives, hard-to-find supplies, science equipment and more.

Technology

Students and parents in grades K–5 do about 15–30 percent of the work online. As students grow older and become more self-directed, instruction and activities involve increased computer use, according to education standards.

WHAT'S NEW in K12:

New “Adaptive” technology

K12 premiered new “Adaptive” technology in many of its online courses. In an “Adaptive” course, the system intelligently “adapts” to the student’s skill and knowledge level, providing help in areas they are needed most.

[LearnBop Math Tutoring](#)

Your child can excel at math! LearnBop is a highly adaptive, self-paced, online math tutoring program for grades 3–12. It includes more than 11,000 state-aligned math problems with step-by-step tutorials developed by award-winning experts that ensure students master concepts. The result: your child will become a confident learner by truly excelling at math and succeeding beyond simply improving homework or cramming for a test. Studies have shown that students increase their learning by 66% when using LearnBop for math tutoring. The program is available for a single student or for a family with up to 4 students for a discounted price.

Math+ Program

The Math Plus program is now available for all students. This is an adaptive math program. These exciting, research-based courses focus on computational fluency, conceptual understanding, and problem-solving. The engaging approach features new

graphics and animations, learning tools, and games.

[embarK12 comprehensive - Kindergarten Readiness](#)

Young children are naturally eager learners. With EmbarK12 Comprehensive— our award-winning, research-based program—children ages 3–5 can receive at home a complete pre-K education that taps into their natural learning abilities and fully prepares them for kindergarten.

[Noodleverse Language Arts Program for K-3](#)

Noodleverse is included in K-3 programs but is also available as a supplemental purchase for \$149. English/Language Arts is a new supplemental online reading and writing skills practice and enrichment program. Noodle verse has thousands of fun activities to get kids excited about reading and writing.

[Phonicsworks](#)

The K12 PhonicsWorks program gives you the tools you need to prepare your child to become an independent reader—the first step towards education for a lifetime. K12 PhonicsWorks is based on the best current research and years of firsthand experience. It is designed to help children recognize the relationship between sounds and letters; blend sounds represented by letters into words; read and spell longer, unfamiliar words by breaking them into syllables; and read “sight” words which do not follow the rules.

Sample lessons for each course and course descriptions can be found at the link below. (Courses with an “A” after the name contain adaptive technology. Courses with an “N” after the name are new courses that are in development.

For information on special pricing available and a demonstration of the online school, contact: Chris Bialka at cbialka@k12.com

To get an order request and find out the actual cost including CWCS discounts, please have your ES email Chris Bialka, the following, completed document: [K12 Quote Request Form](#)

If you have any questions about K12, ask your ES or e-mail Chris Bialka at cbialka@k12.com or Lisa Dallimore at ldallimore@cwcharter.org



Social Studies Department News

Welcome to the 2019-20 school year from the Social Studies Department! This will be our second year using the adopted Pearson Realize curriculum that can be purchased with instructional funds, or checked out from one of our resource center libraries (while supplies last). This curriculum follows the state standards and has an online component. For ordering information and the Pearson Realize log-in, go to the [CWCS Curriculum Page](#). As you plan and prepare for the upcoming school year, I encourage you to browse our Social Studies Department page that has our class lists, goals, resources, and web links. For the Social Studies Department page and the CA Social Studies Framework, go to [Social Studies Department](#). Wishing us all a great school year!



Rosetta Stone Online Language Programs

All three schools in CWCS now offer enrollment for online access to Rosetta Stone throughout the year. The cost will be approximately \$109 per student for all levels of one language until July 31, 2020. If your student finishes a level before the time is up, he/she may go onto the next level. The program now has modules available for 24 different languages (see [Rosetta Stone Languages](#); we are using Foundations platform). If you change your mind about the language chosen, your ES may contact the administrator to change to another language. You and your ES will have online access to download progress reports. You will also have access, though your ES, to downloadable workbooks and tests (currently available in English, Spanish, French, German). For High School students desiring credit, you will need to add EE access, currently available in several languages. See your ES for details.

Rosetta Stone correlates to state and national standards for English as a Second Language (ESL) and world language studies. To see how it works and try an online demo, go to <https://www.rosstattstone.com/demo> and click on "Start our free demo".

Rosetta Stone [System Requirements](#)

You must have a High Speed Internet connection and a microphone headset. The program now also works on iPads and Chromebooks although you will need a full computer for the quizzes and writing modules.

If interested, please **email your ES to sign you up**. Your ES will need the following information to request a license:

Student Name
School

Language Desired

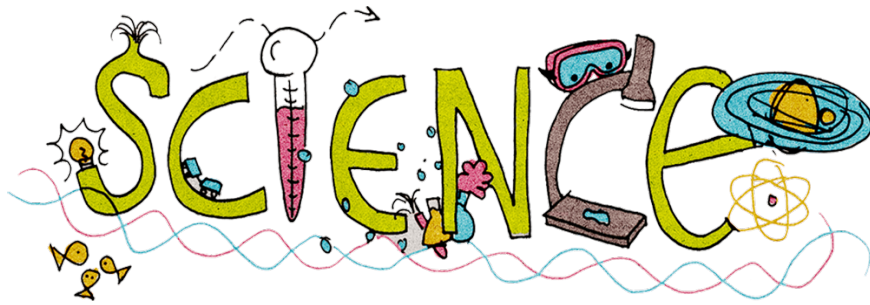
“New to Rosetta Stone,” “continuing from last year,” or “continuing but changing to a new language”

Questions? Contact ES Cathy Moretto at cmoretto@cwcharter.org.



Outdoor Science School

Connecting Waters Charter Schools will again be attending Outdoor Science School at Mount Hermon in the mountains above Santa Cruz. We are going in late January. The cost will be approximately \$275 and will come from 2nd semester funding. Watch future newsletters and e-mail Listserves in the Spring. For more information about [the camp](#), (When viewing the site, note that we are NOT attending homeschool camp,)



Washington, D.C.

Trip

All students and/or families interested in traveling as a representative of our school from April 13-17, 2020, please click [enroll!](#) You need only put down your \$95 deposit with EF Explore America and enroll in one of the payment plans. The total all-inclusive trip cost is just \$1,999 per student or \$2,299 per adult traveler. *This trip is open to all students of CWCS schools. Students in grades 7-12 may travel independently, students in grades 6 and below must travel with a chaperone.* We are very excited about our trip! For additional information, please contact Jamie Ulloa, julloa@cwcharter.org, 209-874-1119, ext. 296.



Immunization Information

Hello Friends in Schools,

We very much hope that you've been able to experience a bit of summer and have some time off. It is now that time of year when families might be starting to panic a bit about the immunization status of their children and where to get them immunized for school entry.

For any parents who are asking, the **Very Best** place for their children to be immunized is at their doctor's office – their medical home. If they do not have a doctor, most all of the federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) in Alameda County are able to enroll children into care and see them either the same day or the next day if they are low income or do not have health insurance and they do not already have a provider.

We encourage you to please share the [Alameda County Immunization Clinics list](#) with all parents who do not have a doctor for their children – it includes all of the FQHCs by city and it the first thing to click [ACPHD](#). Families needing to enroll in health care can

also call 1-888-604-4636 to help refer them into a medical home, or to visit an FQHC. This is often the fastest way to get immunized.

A last resort option is some Back-to-School supplemental Immunization Clinics from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm on

- August 1
- August 8
- August 15
- August 22

At Oakland's Family Justice Center at 470 27th Street – between Broadway and Telegraph in Oakland. These clinics are advertised on the same clinics list above.



Back to School Parent and Educator Training

For CWCS Parents and Education Specialists
Offered by: Connecting Waters Charter Schools

We are excited to bring back our Parent-Teacher Professional Development Training sessions this year! Join us for our Back to School Celebration and learn some cool stuff too. Topics include: Organizational Tips, Website Navigation, Curriculum, CAASPP tips/tricks, and more! East Bay Area will have a Vendor and Community College showcase as well from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Please encourage your families to attend! Child care is available. Parents from any CWCS school can attend either event.

Date: Monday, August 26, 2019
Time: 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Location: East Bay Area
Our Lady of the Rosary Gymnasium 703 C Street
Union City, CA 94587

And

Date: Friday, September 6, 2019
Time: 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Location: Modesto Area
Clarion Hotel 1612 Sisk Rd, Modesto, CA 95350

Join us for this parent training to kick off the new year. Materials and light refreshments will be provided. Mark your calendar now!

Contacts: Shoni Johnson, Curriculum & Assessment Director
sjohnson@cwcharter.org; & Bev Harris, CWCS RC Coordinator bharris@cwcharter.org