

Cougar New Tech Annual Trust Day

By Anna Crosby



(Left to Right); Allen Washington, Wesley Bryan, Joshua Cable, Henry Gibson, Nick Polk, Jackson Long, Deondre Way, Amaya Bunton, Hunter Pinckney, and Jason Hadwin. Photo by Anna Crosby.

On Monday, Nov. 8, Cougar New Tech's fourth annual Trust Day was held at the Colleton County High School baseball field. More than 300 students participated in the day full of team-building activities.

"The day is designed to foster collaboration," Director Josh Cable says, a time for "fellowship among the students and staff."

The Cougar New Tech program (CNT) is a learning environment that is focused on project-based learning and relies heavily on cooperative learning. For more information on CNT, visit cougarnewtech.com and see their "about us" section.

This type of learning is referred to as "blended learning." Students find real-life issues that relate to their academic focus and develop projects that seek to answer a particular problem. This might be anything from bringing attention to local issues, to getting students involved in an issue that may lead



to a new legislation on various local problems.

CNT is also geared toward community involvement, where community leaders are invited to come in and help, and in some cases even learn from the students. This concept of learning that CNT embodies is something only offered to students in a handful of schools in South Carolina.

CNT has gained so much notice that it is now being a model for schools around the country that want to learn more about the successes of this educational model. With all that being said, this is why Trust Day is so important to CNT staff, students, and parents.

Teams are assembled from all four grade levels in an effort to introduce students to their classmates from different backgrounds and peer groups. The event has evolved and grown over the years with CNT. This year, teams participated in a tug of war, kickball, and ultimate Frisbee in the athletic fields. Team board games and puzzles such as the "human knot" challenged the teams' abilities to collaborate in solving a common problem. Students also were able to bond over activities such as face painting and a tie-dyeing station.

The students enjoyed a day of food and fellowship thanks to the support of the CNT and CCHS staff along with donations made by the CNT parents. "CNT looks forward to its next cultural experience day in the early spring," says Cable, when it will open its doors to the community for the annual CNT Expo.



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