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Celebrating the new school year

Three City School District of Albany schools held special events for their communities on the first Saturday of the new school year, including the first-ever homecoming celebration at North Albany Academy.

Arbor Hill Elementary School and Giffen Memorial Elementary School also held back-to-school events for families on a steamy late-summer day Sept. 8. Later in September, Delaware Community School also welcomed families back with a picnic and other activities.



North Albany Academy's Homecoming Parade on Sept. 8.

In north Albany, a parade of students kicked off from the North Albany YMCA in the morning and was followed by a cookout and family gathering at the North Albany American Legion Post.

“Our goal is to create a sense of belonging in our community, and a connection between our graduates and the school,” said North Albany Academy Principal Dale Getto. “We want to encourage our alumni to return to the community as leaders and mentors for younger students.”

Giffen held its Third Annual Back-to-School Celebration, including children’s rides, information and service providers, food and music. The school also gave away more than 200 book bags filled with new school supplies.



Good food, family and friends Sept. 21 at Delaware Community School.

“This celebration helps us stay connected with our families as we strengthen our community ties and form new partnerships,” said Acting Principal Beverly Ivey.

Arbor Hill Elementary’s Fun Fair attracted more than 220 participants. The event featured relay races, potato sack races, Double Dutch and a butterfly tent. Teachers and TAs attended and brought their own families to share in the day’s festivities.

“Arbor Hill Elementary will continue to strive for excellence as we work to strengthen our family and community relationships,” said Principal Rosalind Gaines-Harrell. “In doing so, they maintain a vested interest in our children’s education. This day lends itself toward that goal and expectation.”

On Sept. 21, Delaware Community School held its Welcome Back to School Picnic. Many students came with their families to celebrate the start of the school year.

“It was great to reconnect with old families and meet new ones,” said Principal Maria Vitillo-Witazek. “It was truly a community event and enjoyed by all who attended.”