

WEBSTER HILL CONNECTION

September 16, 2010

"The most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or status, but the extent to which that student's family is involved."

National Education Association

Dear Webster Hill Families,

Once again, Webster Hill is off to a great start. Children are busy learning routines, transitions, procedures, and expectations. The first weeks are critical in establishing the tone for a successful school year. Please take the time to talk frequently as a family about what is being learned at school. "What did you learn today?" often produces a response of, "Nothing." Try and phrase your questions differently to foster a healthy discussion.

We had a great turnout at Open House and the Welcome Back Picnic. If I didn't get the chance to talk with you then, I hope to have the opportunity during Webster Hill's Curriculum Night on the 23rd. I've had the opportunity to visit each of the classes and have observed the children during lunch and recess. The staff at Webster Hill will be working together to provide an environment which helps each child meet their full potential behaviorally, socially and academically.

The Importance of Sleep - How many hours of sleep do children need each night? If you answered "seven or eight," your kids may be among millions of sleep-deprived American youngsters. Actually, the ideal amount of sleep for children in elementary school is nine to ten hours per night. Like adults, they suffer when they don't get enough sleep. They can't concentrate on their schoolwork, they have trouble remembering things, they may become irritable and fidgety, and they may be vulnerable to colds and flu. Clearly, it's in your and their best interests to make sure they sleep well, and long, every night. Develop a consistent routine and make that routine a priority. If you are having trouble getting your kids to bed at a reasonable time, please talk with your child's pediatrician for advice or give us a call. (adapted from NAESP's Report to Parents)

Butterfly Garden - Thank you to all the families who found eggs, took care of caterpillars and brought butterflies to our butterfly garden this summer. We all appreciate your commitment to our Living Courtyard. Thank you also to our Courtyard Committee who spent time in the hot sun weeding and beautifying this wonderful part of Webster Hill School. We hope you can make it to the butterfly release next Thursday at 2:00!

Safety — Thank you for supporting us in providing a safe environment for your children during opening and dismissal. You play an important role in making our school a true community so please play an active role in your child's education. If you are coming in to volunteer or for lunch, please check in at the office. If you have any questions about where to pick up your child at the end of the day or after an after-school club or activity, please speak with your child's teacher or club leader.

Welcome to Webster Hill—Please join me in welcoming Alison McLellan, student teacher in Ms. Howard's room, Ashley Bartolomei, student teacher in Mrs. Leopold's room and Amybeth Gustavson, student teacher in Mrs. Lewis' room.

Jeff



INTRODUCING NEW STAFF . . .

Amy Snyder—Reading Specialist

Mrs. Snyder received her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from the State University of New York (SUNY), her Master's Degree in Literacy from Alfred University in New York and was Trained in Reading Recovery at Niagara University in Niagara, New York.

She formerly taught Kindergarten and Grade 1 in Mayfield, NY, was a Reading Specialist and Reading Recovery teacher in Lockport, NY and and Reading and Math Support teacher and Reading Consultant in Enfield, CT.

She was an assistant coach for girls' soccer and basketball. She loves her Siberian Husky, outdoor sports, baking and, of course, reading!

We are happy to welcome Mrs. Snyder to Webster Hill.

THANK YOU . . .

Sincere thanks to the following parents and children who collated, assembled and delivered the first-day packets on a very hot day in late August. Their assistance was very much appreciated.

Diana Tsipolitis and Sophia
Lisa Reck and Carter
Judy Wyman-Kelly, Leah and Sarah
Linda Geisler
Kathleen Richards, Dylan and Megan

Additional thanks to PTO President Kathleen Richards and Judy Wyman-Kelly for preparing the staff Back-to-School Luncheon which was enjoyed by all and to Carolyn Schulken who helped them clean up.

Thank you to Kathleen Richards for the staff welcome back goodie bags. What a nice treat!

And, finally, thank you to Carolyn Schulken for preparing the Back-to-School Parent Reception.

*With appreciation,
The Webster Hill Staff*



VACANT SEAT PROGRAM

Application Start Date: October 4, 2010

The West Hartford Public Schools vacant seat program utilizes **available** space on school buses. This program allows students to ride buses, where space is available, who under the West Hartford Public Schools Transportation policy are not eligible for transportation. **No additional bus stops are added to the routes for this program.**

Interested parents should contact the West Hartford Public Schools Transportation Office at 860-561-6647 for additional information on or after October 4. **Requests are taken in this office by telephone on a first come, first served basis starting at 8:00 am on Monday, October 4.**

ELC LOTTERY APPLICATIONS

The Early Learning Center at Whiting Lane School and Aiken Elementary School is now accepting applications for the 2011-2012 school year. The program is family centered and has half day sessions that meet four days a week. A lottery will be conducted in January.

To be considered for the program, children must be toilet-trained by the start of the school year and exhibit age-appropriate language, social and play skills. All applicants must participate in a play-based screening prior to being considered for the lottery selection.

If you are interested, please contact Pam Macca at 233-1455. The application process will close on November 30, 2010.

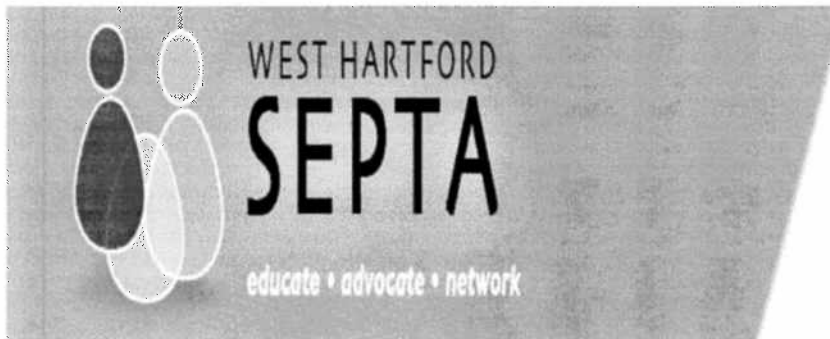
LUNCH LOANS

Dear Parents of New Students,
The office is able to loan lunch money to students whose debit account may have lapsed or students who have forgotten their lunch money. A notice will be sent home with your child if he or she has borrowed money. We ask that you return this money as quickly as possible to enable us to continue to make loans. A loan must be repaid before the child may borrow again.

Parents of returning children, if your child had an outstanding loan at the end of last year, you will be getting an overdue notice. That loan must be repaid before your child may borrow again.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- September 17** School Picture Day—All children must have picture envelope with them on picture day!
- September 23** Butterfly Release
2:00 pm Courtyard
Curriculum Night
5:45—8 pm
- September 24** PTO Wrapping Paper Fundraiser Ends
- October 11** Columbus Day—School/Office Closed
- October 12—15** Grade 5 to Nature's Classroom
Colebrook, CT
- October 22** Kindergarten Field Trip to Indian Orchard
9:30 am—12:00 pm



September 29, 2010, Wednesday, 7:15 PM at Whiting Lane School. "West Hartford Special Education Update," with Superintendent Dr. Karen List and Director of Pupil Services, Glenn McGrath.

Please contact Carrie Berman at cberman01@snet.net if you have any questions.

Coffee and Conversation

Friday, October 1, 2010
Panera Bread, Bishop's Corner
9:30-10:30 a.m.

Coffee and Conversation is an informal gathering of parents of children receiving special education and related services. Meet with other West Hartford parents who have children receiving special education services. All are welcome. We hope to see you there!

Words mean more than what is set down on paper. It takes the human voice to infuse them with shades of deeper meaning. -Maya Angelou

Teachers naturally assess their students throughout the day. By watching and evaluating, in whole or group lessons, or one-to-one conferences, teachers listen to their students, constantly assessing each student's individual needs. It is these moments during the school day that provide teachers with information that is used to determine the appropriate instructional steps for each child.

During the fall months, students take several district assessments. In grades 3-5, three of these assessments are the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP), the Direct Assessment of Writing (DAW), and the Editing and Revising Assessment. All three assessments are helpful in directing instruction as well as in preparation for the March CMT.

- During the week of September 13-17, the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students practice their writing skills with a prompt. These writing pieces are taken to a workshop where teachers across the district meet together to learn how to score the writing according to the rubric and anchor sets established by the Connecticut State Department of Education. The teachers score the students' writing prompts using a scale score of 1-6 (1 is minimal fluency, brief with few details, awkward and confusing; and 6 as the highest score indicating a well-developed and fluent writing piece). Each writing piece receives two scores from two different teachers. Those scores are then added together for one final score ranging from 2-12. The workshops and scores help the teachers to guide their instruction and meet the individual needs of their students.
- During the week of September 20-24, the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students will take the town-wide reading comprehension test called the DRP. A similar DRP test is also part of the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) that will be administered in March. The DRP measures a student's ability to process and understand nonfiction passages written at different levels of difficulty/readability. The DRP results are used for several purposes: to evaluate the current level of student achievement in reading, to measure growth in the ability to read with comprehension and to assist teachers in tailoring instruction to meet the needs of students based on their independent and instructional reading levels.
- During the week of October 4-8, the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students will take the district Editing and Revising Assessment. This test is formatted with question stems and passages similar to the type that students are expected to answer on the March CMT. The test includes both open-ended and multiple choice types of responses. The questions relate to a "draft" of a writing piece (that appears in the test itself) that needs editing and/or revising.

The feedback from these assessments provides teachers with a window into each child's understanding of the reading, comprehension, writing, editing, and revising processes. The results from the fall assessments provide baseline data for the teachers to work from. This information helps teachers to plan better and more differentiated instruction, meeting the needs of all of our learners. Please contact your child's teacher or myself if you have questions about the DRP, the DAW or the Editing and Revising Assessment.

School/Community Partners

West Hartford Police Support West Hartford's Health Education Curriculum

As part of elementary health education, the WHPD Community Relations Officers support the curriculum by presenting “guest lessons” directly tied into the health objectives. Officers visit the classroom twice during the school year -- once in the fall and once in the spring. Not only do these officers offer content information, but more importantly they establish the police as “trusted adults” who can help if the need arises. Below find an overview of the presentation topics at each grade level. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please do not hesitate to contact:

- Lt. Melanson, West Hartford Police Department, Supervisor for the Community Relations Officers, e-mail dmelanson@westhartford.org, phone 860-523-2050
- Rosey Bonner, West Hartford Public Schools, Department Supervisor for Health and Physical Education, e-mail rosemarie_bonner@whps.org, phone 860-561-6639.
- Officer Cogle, Webster Hill Elementary School Community Police Officer, e-mail lcogle@westhartford.org, phone 860-523-2052

Overview of Police Presentations in Elementary Health

Kindergarten	<p>Officer Familiarization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizing police officers by their uniform, badges, and their “tools,” including what is on their equipment belt • Knowing where they can find police officers • Identifying police officers as “trusted adults” <p>Stranger Danger I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and being aware of strangers • Identifying “trusted adults” • Introducing “Run, Remember, Report” • Learning how and when to use 911
Grade One	<p>Pedestrian Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning how to walk safely and cross streets safely • Reinforcing “Run, Remember, Report” <p>Stranger Danger II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and developing awareness of strangers and other unsafe situations • Identifying “trusted adults” • Reinforcing “Run, Remember, Report”
Grade Two	<p>Building Character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining character and reputation • Discussing how actions define our character <p>Bicycle Safety 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying basic bicycle road rules • Discussing equipment safety, including how to properly fit your bicycle to the rider and importance of helmets

<p>Grade Three</p>	<p>Substance Abuse I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking about medicines as drugs, as well as tobacco and alcohol • Emphasizing that students never self-medicate, but always seek a “trusted adult” • Reviewing how and when to use 911 <p>Child Abuse and Discipline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking about types of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, private abuse • Defining discipline, how it is different from abuse • Knowing how to access a “trusted adult”
<p>Grade Four</p>	<p>Responsibility and Home Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing basic home safety: house rules, answering the door or the phone • Discussing dangerous situation: weapons, fire, injuries and accidents • Reviewing how and when to use 911 <p>Bicycle Safety II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing basic bicycle road rules • Discussing equipment safety, responsibility for own actions, and the importance of riding in single file line
<p>Grade Five</p>	<p>Internet Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying the basics of on-line etiquette and safety rules • Discussing cyberbullying and how to handle it • Identifying “trusted adults” and “safe on-line buddies” <p>Substance Abuse II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking about drugs, with a focus on alcohol • Practicing refusal skills in scenarios dealing with peer pressure • Talking about the influence of media • Identifying “trusted adults” and the role of the police officer in helping deal with situations

*Due to police scheduling and responsibilities, these presentations may not be able to occur at the times designated on the scope and sequence.

Town of West Hartford – West Hartford Public Schools



Plant and Facilities Services Department
17 Brixton Street, West Hartford, CT 06110
Phone: 860 561-7920
Fax: 860 561-8141



To: All West Hartford Public School Building Occupants

From: Robert Palmer, Director of Plant & Facilities Services

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R. Palmer", written over the name "Robert Palmer" in the "From:" line.

Date: September 2010

Re: Asbestos Information

As a representative of the West Hartford Public Schools and pursuant to the regulations of the EPA's *Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA)*, this memo is to notify you of the presence of asbestos and asbestos related activities within the school district.

We are aware that there is some form(s) of asbestos in some of our buildings and will continue a program of monitoring and removing materials as necessary. The monitoring consists of a visual inspection of all known asbestos-containing building materials (*ACBM*) every six months. It is our belief that any remaining asbestos does not present a health hazard to student or staff populations.

A re-inspection was completed in 2008. The updated Management Plan will be available for public inspection at the following address:

West Hartford Public Schools
Plant & Facilities Services Department
17 Brixton Street
West Hartford, Connecticut 06110

For further information concerning *ACBM*, you may contact Niel J. Andersen, Manager of Building Services, (860) 561-7920.

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From: Robert Palmer, Director of Plant & Facilities Services

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R. Palmer", written over the printed name.

Date: September 2010

Re: IPM (Integrated Pest Management) Plan

On June 27, 2000, the Board of Education approved a policy on Integrated Pest Management required of the State of Connecticut, Public Act No. 99-165. The West Hartford Public School system has implemented an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan for our school buildings and grounds. The plan, which will be administered through the Plant & Facilities Services Department, deals with the use of pesticides in the buildings and on the grounds.

Any person within the staff or student population may **register at their school** so that they may receive prior notice of pesticide applications. Such notice shall be given twenty-four hours in advance to any and all registrants. **Please note that pesticide applications (inside or outside) are not done during the school day while the students or staff are present, except in emergency conditions.**

The pesticide application activity for the prior year (2009) is on the other side of this letter. Please feel free to contact Niel Andersen, Manager of Building Services, if you have any questions (860) 561-7920.

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To: All West Hartford Public School Building Occupants
From: Robert Palmer, Director of Plant & Facilities Services
Date: September 2010
Re: Green Cleaning Information

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R. Palmer", written over the "From:" line of the memo.

West Hartford Public Schools, in compliance with the requirements of the State of Connecticut Public Act 09-81 regarding green cleaning products in schools, is providing this information on the cleaning products used in our facilities. We have initiated a Green Cleaning Program which will be on-going. The intent of the green cleaning program is to reduce the exposure of the building's occupants from potentially hazardous products, equipment or procedures which could adversely affect human health and the environment, indoors and outdoors.

The components of our Green Cleaning Program as required by Connecticut Public Act 09-81 include:

- A description and names of environmentally preferable cleaning products being used in the schools.
- The location and application of where cleaning products are used.
- The schedule or frequency of when such cleaning products are applied.
- We will work towards eliminating and monitoring cleaning products being brought in from outside unauthorized sources as required by CT Public Act 09-81 ("No parent, guardian, teacher or staff member may bring into the school facility any consumer products which is intended to clean, deodorize, sanitize or disinfect.")
- The name of the designees who may be contacted for further information will be provided.

Description & Product Names of Environmentally Preferable Cleaning Products

West Hartford Public Schools are utilizing a Chemical Management System for dispensing cleaning chemicals. These systems are placed in strategic and secured locations of each school. The system is comprised of multiple dispensing options which allow flexibility, economy through accurate & consistent measurement of concentrated cleaners into RTU (Ready-To-Use) spray bottles, buckets, and/or cleaning equipment. See next page for products used and description.

WEBSTER HILL PTO NEWS



Courtyard Committee News . . .

Mark your calendars for our annual school-wide butterfly release to be held on Thursday, September 23, at 2 pm in the Courtyard. (Rain date is Friday, September 24 at 2 pm.)

Come with tissues in hand as our children sing *I believe I Can Fly* and watch our own Webster Hill raised monarch butterflies get on their way to make the long journey to Mexico. We will be tagging these butterflies with the 5th graders the day before the release so we can track their migration to Mexico. Once we tag them, we will send an update in the next *Connection* with our data.

This past summer, many Webster Hill families helped raise monarch caterpillars for this release. The Courtyard Committee would like to express thanks to all those who cared daily for the caterpillars and helped make this year another success. All of our caterpillars and chrysalis are now in every classroom for the children to learn about the life cycle of the butterfly and observe all the stages it entails. Please ask them what has been happening to their class caterpillars! See you all on the 23rd!

Anyone interested in joining the courtyard committee, please contact Linda Houde at elleph_26@yahoo.com.

SEPTEMBER 10, 2010

Please pencil us in...

Our first PTO meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 28, 2010. Please join us at 7 pm in the cafeteria.

We need your help!

Our Genevieve's Fund-raiser is in full swing from September 10 -24.

You can also shop online at www.genevieves.com
Use our account number

Free UPS Shipments on orders of \$80 or more.

Thank you to all of our volunteers!

Ever wonder who collates and stuffs the more than 15 fliers, forms and pamphlets that come home to you on the first day of school? Mrs. Ammerman gets everything ready and this year parent volunteers Kathleen Richards, Judy Wyman-Kelly, Linda Geisler, Lisa Reck, and Diana Tsipolitis (and some of the their kids) put it all together. Please be sure to read everything carefully and fill out the forms and send them back as soon as possible. Thanks!

The PTO provided a scrumptious lunch for the Webster Hill staff on Tuesday (the day of the Open House), a small token of appreciation for all that they do for our kids. Thanks to parent volunteers Kathleen Richards, Carolyn Schulken and Judy Wyman-Kelly for organizing and helping out.

Thank you also to Carolyn Schulken for chairing the Back-to-School Breakfast Reception on the second day of school.

Looking for your summer collection of Box Tops!!

Webster Hill is participating in the Box Tops for Education program again this year. This is an easy way you can help earn money for our school, with no selling and no additional cost to you. Box Tops coupons are on hundreds of your favorite products, such as cereal boxes, juice boxes, and tissue boxes. Clip the coupons and have your child bring them into school. Webster Hill earns 10 cents for each coupon. Last year Webster Hill earned \$1,700 through this program. Our goal is to match that amount this year. The money is used for things like playground equipment, special programs and assemblies, and basic school supplies. In June, the class that has brought in the most coupons during the year will win a pizza party! So, make sure to check all the packages at home before they go into the trash or recycling bin!

Attention Parents: Curriculum Night is Thursday, September 23, 2010

Come to your child's classroom to hear teacher presentations and hear from special are teachers. You may ask questions and explore the dynamics of your child's classroom.



The Stop & Shop A+ program

Don't forget to register your Stop & Shop card.

With A+ School Rewards, points accrue with each purchase where the Stop & Shop Card is used. It even works with purchases made online with Peapod by Stop & Shop.

At the end of each month, these points determine your school's cash total which is automatically credited to its account and school totals updated each month.

Go to <http://www.stopandshop.com/aplus> for more information.



The Fall Leaf Raking Challenge



"Red, Yellow, Orange and Brown,
Leaves are falling all over town!" said Gina as she raked up a big pile of leaves.

"I learned that poem in kindergarten."

"I have a better one," laughed her cousin, Barney.

"Raking leaves is very hard and most of the leaves fell in this backyard!"

"That's a good one, Barney," I said. "I love having lots of trees in my yard,
but it is a big job raking them up in the fall. Thanks for offering to help."

"Who could resist your offer to make taffy apples and hot cider!" said Danny, stopping to rest. (Offering food is a great way to get Danny to do anything!)

"And don't forget, I promised to pay you a nickel for every minute you raked!"

"OK," laughed Danny starting to rake again. "I can take a hint!"

After the job was done and the snacks were eaten, I reached for my purse.

"Let's see. How much do I owe each of you?"

"I raked for 20 minutes," said Gina.

"I raked for 5 more minutes than Gina," bragged Barney.

"I raked 5 minutes less than Gina," admitted Danny.

I got down my big nickel piggy bank and began to pay. How many nickels did I have to pay each child? (You might want to try some of Barney, Danny and Gina's strategies. See "Learn How This Site Works" on the Aunty Math Welcome Page)

<http://www.dupagechildrensmuseum.org/aunty/index.html>

Where will you start? What do you already know that could help you solve the problem? How will you check your answer to be sure you are correct?

Friday, September 17 is School Picture Day! Weather permitting, pictures will be taken outside, check backpacks for picture order forms.

