



Parent Update – August 27, 2007

From Dr. Stella – Superintendent of Schools

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Dear Members of the Beecher Community:

Welcome back to all!

I hope that you and your children have had an enjoyable fun-filled summer. As we begin a new school year, I stop to reflect on the possibilities that can be. I like what I see.

I see wonderful parents and family members who continue to nurture, care for, and support their children every step of that long journey from pre-kindergarten to sixth grade. I see administrators, teachers and staff members who are eager to continue the important mission of caring for, guiding, and, most importantly, teaching the children of *Beecher Road School*. I see wonderful, wholesome students with good values, and with so much potential to become happy productive local and global citizens. I see a school board, whose members give generously of their time and talent in the service of children. I see a town and a community that support education, improving the quality of life for all citizens. I see all the ingredients for success as we start a new school year.

Working together, we will continue to do wonderful things for our children. We are in an exciting time at *Beecher Road School* – a time filled with promise and anticipation of new challenges and opportunities.

Let me update you on several issues that affect the Beecher Community:

1. After an intensive interview process, we have hired eight new staff members to fill openings due to retirements, maternity leaves or resignations. They are as follow:

- Carmel Carriere – Primary Resource Teacher
- Nicole Cioffi – Grade 1
- Jennifer Lloyd – Grade 2
- Kerin Fullam – Grade 2

- Stephanie Eleck – MAG (Level 4)
- Visna Ngov – Grade 5
- Nancy Smerekanicz – Grade 6
- Jeanne Ciarleglio – Teacher Assistant, Kindergarten

The co-principals will communicate additional information concerning staff additions and changes as needed.

2. On Monday, July 16, the Woodbridge School Board thanked exiting Board members Leslie Martino and Sheila Saltzman for their many years of service and welcomed two new board members, Tom Handler and Mark Livesay. At the same meeting, the following new officers of the Board were appointed: Sheila McCrevan, *Chair*; David Barkin, *Vice-Chair*; and Michael Ewing, *Secretary*.
3. Grace Halsey, grade 2 teacher, and Peter Halsey, grade 3 teacher, officially received certification as *Responsive Classroom* trainers. It is an honor for the Woodbridge School District to have fully certified trainers at *Beecher Road School*. Congratulations to both teachers.
4. With a focus on supporting district initiatives, professional learning for teachers and administrators took place throughout the summer months:

- Seven staff members attended a one-week *Writer's Workshop* institute at Columbia University. The attendees were: Carol Bequary, Adrienne Coleman, Ellen Regan, Maureen Krawec, Monique McDonald, Mary Vincetorio, and Mary Sell.
- Staff members Sheila Haverkamp, Joan Benevento, Doreen Merrill and Nancy White represented the Woodbridge School District at a three-day national institute on professional learning communities.

- A three-day *Writer's Workshop* institute was held at Beecher Road School, June 20-22. The institute was facilitated by Columbia University consultants. Approximately, forty staff members attended including administrators, teachers and interns from both the Woodbridge and Bethany School Districts.
 - A five-day *Responsive Classroom* institute was conducted at Beecher Road School from August 13-17. The entire administrative team joined teachers and interns from Beecher Road School for a week of intensive training. The institute was conducted by trainers Grace and Peter Halsey.
5. The following construction projects were completed or will be completed in the near future:
 - ***Carpet replacement***, with non-slip tile, was completed in the corridor that runs from the *technology center* to the *south entry* as well as the *pod* area.
 - ***A new floor*** has been put down in the north gymnasium.
 - ***New borders*** with wood chips are being installed in the playground area.
 - The north parking lot is getting a ***fresh coat of paint*** on all of the markings.
 - ***An architect has been hired*** to begin the process of repairing gaps between the soffits and walls throughout the school building.
 6. An up-dated copy of the district's award-winning *Parent/Student Handbook* has been placed in your child's take-home packet. I invite feedback on the handbook through e-mail or other forms of communication.
 7. A 2007-2008 *school calendar* has been included in your child's take-home packet.
 8. We anticipate that the district's new publication, *A Parents' Guide to the Curriculum*, will be ready for distribution at all *Open House* sessions in September.
 9. As you know, our building remains open throughout the summer months. Over 500 children participated in successful summer

programs. In spite of the constant traffic, our custodians have worked diligently and effectively to get the building ready for the first day of school. Be on the alert, our custodians will be sporting a new look this year.

Please receive this welcome message as encouragement to join the Beecher family in our work with children during the 2007-08 school year. Whether you are a parent or family member, your support in the challenging work of educating our children is very important and valued by all. Consider joining the *PTO* and offering your services as a volunteer.

The *Woodbridge Board of Education*, school administrators, teachers, staff and I look forward to working with parents and other members of the community in order to make this the best and brightest school year ever. Working together, we will do wonderful things for the children of *Beecher Road School*.

Best wishes for a successful and happy school year!

Sincerely,

Gaeton F. Stella, Ph.D.
Superintendent