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## Parent Update – August 19, 2009

### From Dr. Stella – Superintendent of Schools

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**Welcome back to all!**

**First day of school: Monday, August 31**

I hope that you and your children have had an enjoyable fun-filled summer. With a strong commitment to work for the success of your children, our administrative team, the entire staff of *Beecher Road School*, and I look forward to the new school year.

There are many things that we expect to see happening in the 2009 – 2010 school year at Beecher Road School. We look forward to enhancing the quality and depth of our reading and writing programs. In addition, there will be a curriculum review in mathematics, grades K-6, as part of the Board of Education approved curriculum cycle. The use of technology will expand as a tool for accelerating student learning. The Arts will continue to make learning come alive at Beecher Road School. A revised social studies curriculum will be implemented in grades K-4. Plans are being developed for the coming year in the area of wellness in nutrition, physical activity, outdoor classroom, and policy review. In addition, we will continue to look for new ways to support the emotional and social development of children. Likewise, it is anticipated that, through a Town appointed committee, proposals for a major school facilities upgrade will be brought to referendum. We also expect to have solar panels installed on the roof of the Kindergarten wing as a first step in energy efficiency and efforts to *go green*.

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



**Monique MacDonald is  
“Teacher of the Year”**

Monique joined the faculty of BRS in 2001 as a Reading Consultant. During her tenure in this position, she worked with teachers and administrators to implement a balanced literacy program. In

2005, Monique chose to return to the classroom and has been a leader in the implementation of the *Writing* and *Reading Workshop* programs at the third grade level. Monique is an exemplary teacher and leader. She shares her teaching expertise with colleagues and serves as a role model of professionalism.

### **You’re Invited! Help Us Dedicate the New Kucinkas Memorial Exercise Loop**

**Historic Community Event  
Dedication & Ribbon Cutting  
September 2 at 5:00 PM  
BRS North Campus**  
Town & State Officials’ Comments  
Community Walk Around the Loop  
followed by  
PTO Ice Cream Social  
Dee Jay Music

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#### **Staff changes for the new school year**

You may want to see if familiar teachers have new assignments this year.

- Timothy Rourke, formerly a Grade 5 teacher, is now teaching 4<sup>th</sup> grade;
- James Crawford, formerly a Grade 6 Resource teacher, is now teaching 3<sup>rd</sup> grade;
- Mary Riley-Maier, formerly an Intermediate Language Arts specialist, is now a Grade 2 resource room teacher;
- Carmel Carriere, formerly a Grade 2 Resource teacher is now a 4<sup>th</sup> grade resource teacher;
- Sue Simoniello, formerly a Grade 4 Resource teacher, is now a 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Resource teacher;
- Monique MacDonald, formerly a Grade 3 teacher, is now assigned to Intermediate Language Arts.

#### **Say “hello” to our new music teacher**

A new music teacher has been hired to fill the vacancy due to Michale Thalberg’s retirement. Her name is Nadia Collado. Nadia is an excellent pianist and is also bilingual in English and Spanish. In addition to her assigned classes, Nadia looks forward to expanding the chorus as well as to enhance our World Language program through music. Welcome Nadia Collado.

### ***Summer maintenance projects update***

The following facility projects were completed or will be completed in the near future:

- Detailed room cleaning, floor waxing and painting have kept our custodial staff busy this summer. The school facility looks better than ever.
- The north parking lot has been lined and painted.
- One of the two trailers in the south parking lot has been removed. The second will be relocated in the near future.
- The intrusion alarm system is being upgraded to combine two systems into one for enhanced capabilities of programming and monitoring.
- Grounds maintenance work is being done now.
- The BRS Town Building Committee has been meeting diligently over the summer months, preparing the way for an anticipated Town referendum in 2010 on plans for a major infrastructure update of BRS.

### ***Connecticut Mastery Test results***

We have received the scores from last spring's CMT's, and there are many indicators of success. These results will be shared at the September 21 Board of Education meeting as well as in a future newsletter. Student CMT reports will be sent home to parents when they are received from the state.

### ***A busy summer at Beecher***

*Summer programs for children:* Did you know that hundreds of children participate in summer programs held at *Beecher Road School* every day? It is amazing to see the breadth of opportunities offered to enrich minds and build bodies. The Woodbridge Recreation Department uses the BRS facility for many summer programs. School programs such as the *Summer Enrichment Program* and *Extended Day Program* attract hundreds. The school is a year-round hub of exciting activity.

*Summer Curriculum Work:* Administrators and staff members worked on several key curriculum areas this summer including Social Studies, Health Education, World Language (Spanish), Language Arts, Science and a SRBI (*Scientifically Research Based Intervention*) school-wide model.

*Reader's/Writer's Institute(s):* A four-day *Reader's Workshop* Institute was conducted at BRS from June 23 to June 26. The well-attended institute was broken into two sections – primary and intermediate. During the months of July and August, members of the BRS staff attended weeklong *Reader's* or *Writer's Workshop* Institutes at Columbia University. Attendees included: *Writing Institute* --- Stephanie Eleck, Elena Lavigne, Mary Riley-Maier, Shannon Saunders; and, *Advanced Reading Institute:* Nicole Chick, Jennifer Crespi, Monique MacDonald, Lori Patrick, Ellen Regan, Mary Sell, and Mary Vincitorio.

### ***It's sad to say, but I have to say it***

This summer, as was done last summer, the *Beecher Road School* sign located at the Beecher Road entrance to the campus was recently stolen. Some may call this a prank. I call it a criminal act and consider it very serious. We have to replace the sign, again, needlessly costing taxpayers hundreds of dollars. If you have any information that would help us find the individual(s) responsible for this crime, please notify the Woodbridge Police Department at 387-2511. Or contact me directly by phone at 387-6631 or e-mail, [gstella@woodbridge.k12.ct.us](mailto:gstella@woodbridge.k12.ct.us).

### ***Look in your children's first-day take-home packet***

There are many important items of information that are sent home with your child on the first day of school. Many of them require your attention as soon as possible, if not immediately. Others are there for your information to assist you in planning a successful and pleasurable school experience for your child.

Look for the updated copy of the district's award-winning *Parent/Student Handbook* in your child's take-home packet. The handbook contains literally hundreds of points of information that are critical to ensure that you are informed about your child's school. I invite feedback on the handbook through e-mail or other forms of communication.

### ***"Open House" dates are coming very fast***

The "Open House" nights are a wonderful time to establish relationships and get to know your child's teachers. We encourage you to attend. The dates for the different grades are:

**September 3:** Grades 5 and 6

**September 9:** Grades 3, 4, and Multi-Age Group

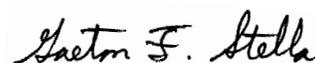
**September 10:** Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2

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Please receive this welcome message as encouragement to join the Beecher family in our work with children during the 2009-2010 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 you and other members of the community in order to make this the best and brightest school year ever.

Sincerely,



Gaeton F. Stella, Ph.D.  
*Superintendent of Schools*