



MR. GILBERT'S PARENT UPDATE



Superintendent of Schools
Woodbridge School District

woodbridge.k12.ct.us

November 17, 2016

Dear Beecher Road School Families:

At this special time of the year, we are all reminded of how grateful we are to live in such a wonderful and supportive community as Woodbridge. We express thanks for the special relationships that exist between students, educators, parents and community members in our town. At this time of year, I also want to express my thanks to all of you for welcoming me so warmly as your new Superintendent.

Happy Thanksgiving

Saving Money & the Planet

Woodbridge Town Hall, Beecher Road School and Amity Regional High School all received an Energy Star certification this year at a ceremony organized by United Illuminating and Energize Connecticut. Qualifying municipalities were presented with plaques by Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP).

The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) certifies appliances and buildings as "Energy Star" if they are energy efficient. Only certain categories of buildings, such as office buildings, Town Halls and schools are eligible to earn this qualification.

The Energy Star certification means that a building is more energy efficient than 75% of similar buildings in the same category.



The Town is monitoring the energy usage at BRS through an online tool created by the EPA to measure and track energy consumption, as well as greenhouse emissions. Recently, the Town earned approximately \$500,000 in incentives to complete lighting and window upgrades, as well as improvements to the chiller and boiler systems at BRS. Overall, including eight town buildings, BRS and Amity High School, Woodbridge has achieved an annual estimated energy cost savings of nearly \$440,000.

Woodbridge Wins Communications Awards

Recently, we sent examples of Board of Ed. presentations and communications to the annual Connecticut Association of Boards of Education Educational Communications Contest. Woodbridge was recognized with four awards: Top Award Winner – **BRS Handbook**. Three Honorable Mentions: **Meeting Presentations** viewable on You Tube; **Calendar**; **Early Childhood Special Project**. Congratulations Board of Education!



Halloween Hoot – Indeed It Was

The BRS – PTO annual Halloween HOOT was better than ever. It's a safe place for children and their parents to enjoy the holiday traditions. Costumes, games, music, goodies and more are all a part of the good time. But this year a new activity was added: the dunk tank. Principal Gina Priso, Assistant Principal Lisa Sherman and Superintendent Bob Gilbert all took their turn enjoying a few dips in the water that afternoon. Much to their delight, students got to dunk the grown-ups.



Superintendent Gilbert ready for the dunk

Our BRS Student Council showed leadership at the HOOT by helping our youngest guests with Halloween crafts. And, (below), during parent-teacher conferences they raised money for the *Jeremy Saxe Foundation*, *K-9 First Responders* and the *Woodbridge Food & Fuel Fund*.



Jillian, Cecilia, Melissa and Samantha selling goodies

BRS Highlighted at State Conference

Dr. Kris Rose, BRS school psychologist, and Jill Colomonic, teacher assistant in Project Safe, recently presented a session on *The Primary Mental Health Project* at the State Department of Education meeting for special education administrators. The Connecticut Primary Mental Health Project is a long-term research-based initiative that has been going on for 35 years. Through state grants, school districts implement play sessions that address social emotional needs of children at risk.



BRS staff Kris Rose and Jill Colomonic present at State Conference

At the conference Dr. Rose and Ms. Colomonic shared the BRS school-based classroom and Family Yoga Practice and Family Resource Team with other practitioners from schools throughout the state.

BRS has been a participant for the past 20 years. Our project offers leadership in the development of Complementary Mental Health components that are grant-funded.

We extend our thanks to these BRS staff members for highlighting our program for others to replicate.

MAG Gets A Visit From New Hampshire Educators

Two groups of New Hampshire Educators, currently piloting non graded/ multi-age classrooms, are headed to our MAG program for a close-up look. They have chosen BRS as one of two sites in the nation to further their study and professional learning.

The BRS Multi-Age-Grade program has been in existence at BRS for 25 years. Perhaps its influence will find its way to the Granite State.



CARES Assemblies – Caring for our Students



The entire BRS community gets together several times each year to reinforce the importance of a positive school climate and culture.

As we all know, there has been a great deal of national news both recently and during the past year. We want to remind parents that Beecher Road School continues to place a high priority on making our students feel safe, valued and reassured. We use the Responsive Classroom model and many other school initiatives to strengthen our classroom communities, celebrate our differences and emphasize our strong values. Thank you for your partnership in this.

You've seen this menu. But do you realize what's for lunch in 2016?

Menus for October 2016

Alternate Entree

JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED.

NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK

COLUMBIAN DAY

YOM KIPPUR

No School Today

What food isn't so nutty after all?

STANGE

| Monday, October 12 | Tuesday, October 13 | Wednesday, October 14 | Thursday, October 15 | Friday, October 16 |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entree: Alternate Or Cheddar Pastry with Ham and Sauce Garden Salad Shrimp Broccoli Flour Tortilla Fruit Choice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entree: Alternate Or Breaded Chicken Nuggets Broccoli Cheese Casserole Honey Glazed Carrot Coins Fruit Choice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entree: Alternate Or Chicken Curry Quinoa Salad Garden Salad Fruit Choice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entree: Alternate Or Beef Fajitas with Cheese, Lettuce, Tomatoes, Salsa Shrimp Broccoli Black Bean Corn Salad Fruit Choice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entree: Alternate Or Beef Fajitas with Cheese, Lettuce, Tomatoes, Salsa Shrimp Broccoli Black Bean Corn Salad Fruit Choice |

Veterans Honored at Annual BRS Recognition Event



BRS was once again privileged to have a guest speaker join us to honor our Veterans. Retired

U.S. Army Captain Joseph Barry spoke to our children about what it means to be a veteran. Our ceremony provided an opportunity for students, who had a family member participating in our observance, to escort the veteran and read their service record at the podium. Students also participated in our annual school-wide service event, providing letters and cards to our veterans at the VA Hospital in West Haven. The BRS Band and Choir performed and our veterans had an opportunity to visit our BRS Wall of Honor. In what has become an annual tradition, it was day filled with comments of gratitude and respect for our veterans.

Winter Weather Advisory Information

As has been the practice for many years, the BOWA Superintendents recently notified BOWA parents of the inclement weather process. You should have received this information electronically via my Superintendent's Message. You should have also received an electronic notification regarding *Student Data Privacy*. If you did not receive them and wish to have a hard copy please contact my office. Copies are also available on the district web site www.woodbridge.k12.ct.us under Superintendent's Latest Messages (lower right corner).

As a result of the work of the Superintendent's Cafeteria Task Force over the past two years, major changes in the BRS lunch menus have been implemented. With an emphasis on healthy choices, revisions include:

- New items: black bean corn salad; vegetarian baked beans; crispy kale chips; quinoa salad; brown rice; Chef Suzanne's squash boats
- Healthier choices: soft serve yogurt replaced soft serve ice cream; portion controls; pasta is all at least 50% whole grain and less than 2% "non-creditable" ingredients; turkey franks are not available as a daily alternate - only once a month
- No longer available: Switch Fruit Drink, Sunny-D, ice cream sundaes, Doritos chips, Fruit Loops cereal, large baked pretzels
- "If it's not served in the cafeteria, it's not sold in the vending machine."

A recent complex inspection of menu choices and cafeteria facilities by the State of Connecticut proved very positive. The state program reviewer toured our kitchen, observed all lunch waves and shared feedback. "The Beecher Road School salad bar offers the largest variety of selections of any elementary school salad bar that I have come across to date," was but one of her many positive comments.

(For a more in-depth look : > woodbridge.k12.ct.us > Cafeteria tab (lower right) > School Lunch Insights "An Inside Look" (lower right).

Thanks, Frank!

At our annual Bus Driver Appreciation Breakfast last month, a special presentation was made to retiring bus driver Frank Aveni for his 49 years of serving the town and school.



With Frank are Superintendent Bob Gilbert and Frank's wife Kathy.



Thank you to all parents who provided reflections and feedback at my recent Listen and Learn Sessions. I will be presenting priorities for future work and continuous improvement at our January 17 Board of Education meeting.