



# Parent Update - June 1, 2010

## From Dr. Stella – Superintendent of Schools

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### Reminders: end-of-the-year and summer dates

- *Last Day of School*: Wednesday, June 23. 1:10 p.m. dismissal.
- *Sixth Grade Promotion Ceremony*: Tuesday, June 22. 1:00 p.m. at Amity High School.
- *Sixth Grade Party*: Wednesday, June 23, starting at 2:00 p.m. The Country Club of Woodbridge, 50 Woodfield Rd.
- *SEP – Summer Enrichment Program*: Five Weeks. June 28 – July 30. 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon.
- *Recreation Department programs*: Six Weeks. June 28 – August 6. 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon.
- *Extended Day Program*: Six Weeks. June 28 – August 6. “Early Bird” arrivals 8:00 - 9:00 a.m. Programs, 9:00 - 12:00 noon. *Extended Day* continues 12:00 - 5:30 p.m.
- *First Day of School* for students: August 30. Early dismissal.

### This month - School lunch program goes high-tech



A new **KidServe** computerized cafeteria system will be in service for the first time on Thursday, June 10, 2010. We are starting

the new system at the end of this school year to give all of us a chance to get used to it rather than add more confusion at the start of the new school year.

Each child in the school will have a meal account that is accessed with a personal identification number. The student’s account has two options: 1] A *meal account* – money reserved for meals only. Or, 2] A *general account* – money that can be used for meals and/or snack items. Parents can send money by cash or check that will be applied to their child’s account.

Additional information will be sent to you during the summer that will tell you how to access your child’s account online and review activity.

The new system will make our cafeteria operation more efficient and offer you an easier way to pay for your child’s lunches and provide more information about the BRS lunch program. If you have any questions about **KidServe**, please direct them to Charles Zettergren, Business Manager, at 203-397-2445 or at [czettergren@woodbridge.k12.ct.us](mailto:czettergren@woodbridge.k12.ct.us).

### Family Picnic Scheduled

The BRS-PTO has planned a picnic for families and staff to celebrate another successful school year. June 18, 5 p.m., north playground area. Picnic food, DJ, and lots of fun. Come!

### Praises heaped upon BRS

By all indications the **Tri-State Consortium** visit a few weeks ago was a tremendous success. A group of 16 educators from high performing school districts in Fairfield County and nearby New York included superintendents, curriculum directors, reading specialists and teachers. We asked the team to examine our language arts curriculum and provide very specific feedback.

Members of the visiting team shadowed students, and interviewed teachers, administrators, parents and children. The Tri-State team examined evidence boxes dealing with several important indicators. They also asked qualifying questions and probing questions of a representative group of teachers and administrators. In addition, parent, teacher and student surveys were shared with the team.

On the final afternoon of the visit, the team leaders and the Executive Director of Tri-State met with our administrative team and me to share some initial thoughts and reflections. They included the following affirmations:

- The content and tenor of the school has changed since the last Tri-State visit about six years ago. There has been a dramatic change for the better. Everyone should be proud.
- The collegiality and professionalism among teachers and with the administration was apparent.
- There has been great improvement in many areas, including curriculum and student outcomes.
- David Abbey, Superintendent from New Canaan, who participated in the first Tri-State visit to BRS had this to say: “I’d forgotten that I have been here. There is a stability here that welcomes the teacher’s voice. There are fewer differences and more tolerance.”
- The stability of the administrative team has been a positive factor.
- The district has a vision and it is apparent that hard work is taking place.
- There is a very grass-roots, hands-on, child-focused culture.
- Parents interviewed were very complimentary about the school. Some compared experiences of older siblings vs. younger siblings. The parents were complimentary about the consistency and the way children came home invested in learning and with joy.
- Student interviews also supported the positive changes that have taken place.

Visiting team members stated that their challenge will be to take a system that is doing well, and make recommendations to move it to an even higher level. They said that it would be harder for them to make recommendations because the focus is now on tweaking, more than on large-scale change. But recommend they will. A formal report will be prepared and sent to us within six weeks with recommendations to fashion goals and objectives for the 2010-11 school year and beyond.

## Assigning your child to next year's classroom

This time of year is an exciting one as you and your child end one year and look forward to a new one – after a bit of summer fun, of course. Parents sometimes ask us how we decide where students will be assigned for the following year. A comprehensive process helps guide those decisions.

Your child's classroom teacher and teaching team members consider many factors in placing your child. Some of these factors include: special needs of children, academic achievement, social and emotional needs, peer relationships, class balance by sex, teacher/pupil styles, teacher-parent relationships and maintaining a sense of security for children. Parent input is also considered.

The placement process is time consuming and requires the involvement of the faculty and administration. It is very comprehensive and made in the best interest of all children and the whole school. Final placement decisions are made by the school staff and administration.

### Classroom Teacher Assignments 2010-11

Grade	Teachers	Teachers
Pre-K	DePalma	
Kindergarten	Belisle	Salinardi
	Coleman	Wyman-Ancil
	Dempsey	
Grade 1	Chick	Regan
	Navudu	Sanders
	Piascyk	
Grade 2	Buzzard	Halsey
	Crespi	Nakouzi
Multi-Age	Ahern (4)	Golden (3)
	Burness (2)	Hart-Rooney (1)
Grade 3	Don	Lavigne
	Hutchinson	Vincitorio
Grade 4	Echeverry	Rourke
	Krawec	Waldron
	Reizfeld	
Grade 5	Blinstrubas	McCullom
	Chase	Mumford
	Concilio	Ngov
Grade 6	Eleck	Smerekanicz
	Holowienko	White
	Katzen	

I look forward to seeing you all at our end-of-year activities.

*Gaston F. Stella*

## Third annual ArtsWeek now underway

**ArtsWeek3** is being celebrated today through Friday. This year's theme is "peace." You'll notice over 60 banners, each painted by a class or group, being displayed inside and outside of BRS. The banners, *The Peacegates*, have been created in the manner of Christo and his wife Jeanne Claude, who in 2005 did an exhibition in New York's *Central Park* with 7,500 banners.

The week will be filled with drama presentations, theater games, musical performances and art activities. The PTO will sponsor an *Art Reception* in The Rotunda on Thursday evening from 6:30 - 8:30. On that night both art rooms will be open for puppetry, sculpting and other activities.

Historic photo: On Friday at 1:30, the whole school will assemble on the south field for an aerial photograph. You are invited to join any and all activities.

Thanks to the PTO and a committee of teachers and parents who have organized this wonderful celebration of the arts.

### Congratulations to Margaret Hamilton – newest Board of Education member

The Board of Selectmen has appointed Margaret Hamilton, currently BRS-PTO President, to fill the remainder of Michael Ewing's term, which expires June 30, 2011. As an active participant at Board meetings, Margaret will hit the ground running. Please join me in congratulating Margaret and welcoming her to the Board. I extend my heartfelt thanks to Mike for his dedication and commitment in serving the children of BRS for the last seven years. I also extend my congratulations to Mike on his appointment to the Woodbridge Board of Finance.

### Saying goodbye and saying hello – changes in staff for 2010-11

It is often bittersweet to wish colleagues well as they move on to new chapters in their lives and leave familiar surroundings, friends, children and parents behind. We have cause to celebrate, albeit bittersweet, the new chapters of four BRS teachers. *Janet Brown*, library media specialist; *Emily Cosenza*, special education teacher; and *Monique Osborn*, grade six teacher, will retire from teaching at the end of this school year. *Beverly Russo*, grade four teacher, is leaving BRS for personal reasons. We thank these teachers for their years of dedicated service to the children of BRS and wish them a future that is bright, happy and healthy.

Charles Zettergren, the school district's business manager, will also be leaving us for a similar position in a larger school district. He has served the district for the past four years in one of those *behind the scenes* positions and has contributed much to the smooth functioning of BRS. We thank Chuck for his dedicated service and record of accomplishment.

While saying goodbye to friends and colleagues we also have a chance to say hello to returning staff members. Arianne Buzzard is returning from maternity leave to teach grade two, and Kristine Hart-Rooney, one of the original members, is returning to the Multi Age (MAG) team. Welcome back.