



PARENT UPDATE FROM DR. STELLA SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

August 30, 2011

www.woodbridge.k12.ct.us Woodbridge School District
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Welcome Back to ALL!

I hope that you and your children enjoyed the summer months with lots of time for relaxation, family and friends. What a busy summer it has been for us! Beecher Road School is truly a school that never sleeps. Over the summer months, almost daily, over 500 children and adults have used our facilities in a variety of outstanding programs, e.g. SEP, Extended Day, Recreation Program, Special Education Extended Year Program, Reading Clinic and curriculum writing. I am happy to report that all programs have come to a successful conclusion.

During the summer, there also has been a whirlwind of change for the district and school, including the beginning of an initiative to improve and maintain our school grounds in a way that is environmentally friendly, the appointment of a new Interim Intermediate Principal, and passage by the School Board of a plan for administrative restructuring to a Principal/Assistant Principal model beginning in the 2012 – 2013 school year.

With a strong commitment to work for the success of your children, our administrative team and the entire staff of BRS look forward to a new school year that holds many promises.

Bridges, Our Annual Education Report to the Community

Bridges, our district's report to the citizens of Woodbridge, has once again been sent to every Woodbridge household – over 3,100 of them. Bridges is also posted on the district's web site. The publication provides the citizens of Woodbridge a sampling of many of the things we have accomplished in the past school year. Though it is impossible to capture everything in one 12-page report, this informative piece gives a glimpse to everyone of the high quality of education that we provide for our students.

New Interim Intermediate Principal appointed



At the July meeting of the Board of Education, Donna Pagé was appointed as the Interim Principal for the 2011 – 2012 school year. Ms. Pagé brings a rich background of

experiences to her new position. Among other things, she has been an elementary principal for 19 years and was the 2008 CT Principal of the Year. She has an extensive curriculum and instructional background and is trained in *Responsive Classroom*. She has been referred to as a teacher's teacher. Ms. Pagé is an energetic, hands-on, child-centered leader who loves working with teachers and parents and looks forward to serving the BRS Community.

BRS to become a Pre-K through 6 School starting 2012 -13

There had been a great deal of talk during the past school year about restructuring BRS as a K-6 school with a Principal/Assistant Principal model. I had asked the School Board to continue the Dual Principal model for the 2011 – 2012 school

year in order to give us more time to dialogue and prepare for any future transition. The Board agreed to do so. At their July meeting a motion was unanimously passed to restructure BRS as one school with one Principal and one Assistant Principal rather than the current primary school/intermediate school with a dual principal model. This change will take place in the 2012 -2013 school year. The administrative team and I look forward to working with staff during the coming year to prepare for that transition.

KidServe Cafeteria Payment System

KidServe, our computerized cafeteria system will once again be in service this school year. Any monies in your child's account at the end of June, have been rolled forward to this school year. The amount, if any, will appear in the available account balance section.

Each child in the school has a meal account that is accessed with a personal identification number (PIN).

The student's account has two options:

1. A meal account – money reserved for meals only. This option gives you the greatest control over the items your child can purchase. Only entrees can be purchased with monies in the meal account.
2. A general account – money that can be used for meals and/or snack items. This is the least restrictive option between the two account types.

Parents have two options to make payments:

1. Cash or checks sent to the cafeteria
2. Remit electronically through www.mealpayplus.com

Information that will tell you how to access your child's account online and review activity is included in your child's take home packet.

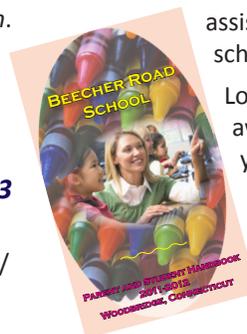
Look in your children's first-day packet

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/Students 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.



New names, changing positions, and welcomes

As we begin a new school year, I would like to provide you with the following personnel update:

- *Donna Pagé* begins her position as Interim Principal of the Intermediate House on August 15, 2011.
- *Cheri Guerra* has been hired as a teacher to fill a 5th grade vacancy. Ms. Guerra comes to us with a rich background in experiences that make her a good match for our team.

There were several staff changes:

- *Teresa Navudu*, formerly a grade 1 teacher, is now teaching grade 2.
- *Carrie Finnelli*, former BRS teacher, will be teaching Mrs. Chick's first grade class for this school year. Congratulations to Mrs. Chick on the birth of her twins.
- *Kristen Concilio*, formerly a grade 5 teacher, is now teaching 3rd grade.
- *Dan Chase*, formerly a 5th grade teacher, is now teaching 6th grade.
- *Carmel Carriere*, formerly a Special Education Teacher for 4th grade will now service grades 3 & 4.
- *Susan Simoniello*, formerly a Special Education Teacher for grade 6, will now service grade 5.
- *Caterina Zdrowski*, formerly a grade 5 Special Education Teacher, will now service grade 6.
- *Jamie Barker* formerly a long term Special Education TA substitute is now an Intermediate Special Education TA
- *Debbie Laydon*, formerly a Special Education Intermediate TA will now be a Kindergarten TA.
- *Vicky Burford*, formerly a TA for 1st grade, will now serve as an Intermediate Special Education TA.
- *Kathleen Holowienko*, formerly a TA for grade 5 will now service grades 3-6.
- *OnaMay Slauson*, formerly a TA for grade 6, will now service grades 3-6,
- *Roberta Anderson*, formerly a TA for grade 2, will now be TA for grades 1&2.
- Welcome back to *Nathalie Tamagnan* who is returning from a leave and will be serving as a Special Education Teaching Assistant in the Primary/Intermediate grades.

Eleven interns from UNH will join us this year: Please welcome *Christine Aveni, Matt DeCrosta, Meghan Foster, Marissa Gebeau, Micheil Koblish, Kellyn Metzler, Catherine Raiti, Christy Rybczyk, Dina Savoca, Caitlin Spratley* and returning intern *Jenn Vizzo*.

Check these off the "to do" list

Several facilities projects have been finished or are in process of being completed.

- The north and south parking lots have been lined and painted.
- Thanks to the custodial staff and cleaning service, summer cleaning is done. Detailed room cleaning, floor waxing, window washing and rug cleaning have been completed.

- Building maintenance and repair on-going
- Grounds maintenance work scheduled to take place at start of school year
- Study of grounds begun with goal of creating a master erosion and sediment control plan
- Continued replacement of ceiling tiles
- HVAC filters cleaned
- Power washed cafeteria tables
- Painted hallways - south wing and rotunda areas
- MAG classrooms floor tiles replaced
- South entry cleanup of gardens and walkway included painting hand rails and completing walkway border
- *Site Needs Assessment Plan* recommendations anticipated in October
- Cleaned and organized basement storage rooms

Connecticut Mastery Test results

We have received the scores from last spring's CMTs. (See the Summer 2011 edition of *Bridges* for an initial overview.) At the September Board of Education meeting, a full analysis will be presented. Results will be posted on the district web site after the September Board of Education meeting. Student CMT reports will be sent home to parents when they are received from the state.

Summer curriculum work

Administrators and staff members have worked on several key curriculum areas this past summer including language arts, mathematics, pre-School - *National Association for the Education of the Young* accreditation, professional development committee work, science (MAG) and world language.

Columbia Readers and Writers Institute: The following faculty/district members attended an advanced five-day Readers or Writers Institute at Columbia University: *Stephanie Eleck, Cheri Guerra, Joseph Holowienko, Elena Lavigne, Monique McDonald, Mary Sell, Michelle Shepard, Guy Stella and Mary Vincitorio.*

"Open House" dates are coming very fast

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 7 – PTO Sponsored Ice Cream Social (All are invited!)
September 8 – Grades 5 and 6 at 6:30 PM
September 13 – Grades 3 and 4, and MAG at 6:30 PM
September 21 – Grades K – 2 at 6:30 PM

Along with my administrative team, I look forward to working with you in the new school year. There is so much to be excited about. My very best wishes for a wonderful school year to you and your children, and a special welcome to our new students and families.

Sincerely,

Laeton F. Stella