



# PARENT UPDATE FROM DR. STELLA SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

June 10, 2015

**woodbridge.k12.ct.us Woodbridge School District**  
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## New Era of Mathematics Education: Tri-State Visiting Team Helps Us Focus

Dear Beecher Families,

As you may remember from the May 26 Parent Update, a visiting group of 14 distinguished educators from high performing school districts in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut came to Woodbridge two weeks ago to help us prepare for a new chapter in mathematics education. The Tri-State Consortium, of which we are members, provides professional educational services to member districts. In our case, we asked for the visiting team to take a thorough look at our developing mathematics program.

Mathematics achievement at BRS has been exceptional through the past several years, in fact, among the best in the state, as measured by the now defunct Connecticut Mastery Test. We have much to be proud of. However, that was yesterday's learning. New concepts in teaching and learning mathematics are now part of our curriculum.

After a year of intense self-study, with widespread input from our staff, we invited the Tri-State team to give us their ideas as we form the foundation for an improved program. Their role was to look at evidence we provided for what we have done during this formative year and to be our thought partners. The team used indicators and specific criteria, as well as conducted interviews with staff, students, parents and Board of Education members.

This summer we will receive a detailed report from the Tri-State Consortium with their commendations and recommendations. This report will help shape a two-year plan as we transform how and what we teach in mathematics. We will continue to look for ways to improve our curriculum and incorporate strategies to fulfill our goal of moving every child forward on their individual learning pathway.

I am grateful to the administration and staff, parents and Board of Education members who have devoted a lot of time, energy and expertise, and to our math specialists Maureen Krawec and Jean Molot for their dedication to move BRS mathematics to a new level of excellence.

## Generous Financial Gift to BRS



Handing over the check, Master Kim (left) believes "a healthy body supports a healthy mind." He has made a financial contribution to support the physical well being of the children at BRS. Master Kim operates the World Champion Taekwondo school of martial arts in Woodbridge. Many BRS students take lessons at his school.

## Families Welcome

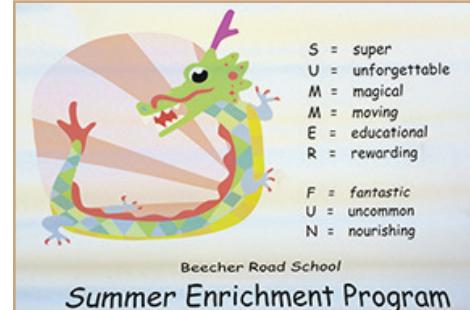


Mrs. Prisco (left) and Mrs. Salinardi prepare to serve the dozens of families who attended the annual Extended Day Program celebration dinner last week. Staffed by BRS teachers and teacher assistants, this long-running program provides families with a safe, educational and recreational setting for before and after school child care. Mrs. Salinardi is the program's director.



We are pleased to tell you, in spite of the continuing major construction upgrades at BRS, all summer programs will run as planned – off site as was done last summer. We extend our thanks to Dr. Dumais, Amity Superintendent of Schools, and Dr. Waynik, Head of Ezra Academy School.

Our Summer Enrichment Program (SEP), Extended Day Program, Primary Literacy Program and the Woodbridge Recreation Department programs will take place at Amity High School at 25 Newton Road. Our programs for children with special needs will take place at Ezra Academy, 75 Rimmon Road.



## Summer Enrichment Program

A new SEP offering is a class in Chinese language and culture. Children in grades 1 – 6 will enjoy learning through games, songs, art projects, outdoor exploration and simple plays. We invite you to look online at the numerous other offerings in SEP to see if something is right for you.

Go > district website > PARENTS tab on top > SUMMER PROGRAMS in drop menu.

The logistics for relocating programs to other sites is challenging, but this extra effort demonstrates our core value that children's summer educational opportunities can't be curtailed because of unusual circumstances.

- **SEP:** 6/29 – 7/24; 9 – 12 Noon
- **Extended Day:** 6/29 – 7/24;  
8 AM - 9 AM and 12:00 PM to 5:30 PM.
- **Woodbridge Rec :** 6/29 – 7/24  
8:45 AM - 12:15 PM
- **Primary Literacy Program:** 6/29 - 7/24  
(Mon - Thurs) 8 AM - 10 AM

## RETIRING AT THE END OF THIS YEAR: GOOD LUCK, GOOD HEALTH AND HAPPINESS



**R**ick Wood is described as calm, reasonable, dedicated, flexible and sensitive. Mr. Wood joined BRS in 1980 as a grade 4 classroom teacher and served as a

teacher of our *talented and gifted* prior to creating the BRS computer lab. During his 35-year career here, among other things, he is credited with establishing the original computer network at BRS as well as making most software selections to support curriculum and grade level learning. His natural curiosity, knowledge, talent and expertise in technology made him an invaluable member of BRS. Over the last few decades he has taught and guided staff, students and parents throughout the myriad changes and integration of technology across the learning spectrum. He has a natural ability to engage students to use computers as a tool for inspiration to enhance their learning. Mr. Wood has had a profound effect on BRS and the Woodbridge community-at-large.

**C**athy Salinardi began her teaching career as a middle school art teacher in the Seymour Public Schools. She joined

the kindergarten team in Woodbridge in 1990 and has been a member of BRS for 25 years. Mrs. Salinardi has also served as the *Summer Enrichment Program (SEP)* Director as well as the *Extended Day* Director. A strong advocate for children, her positive can-do attitude and natural rapport with students, parents and staff is the epitome of "professional." Her nurturing approach to creativity and cooperative learning permeates her classroom. Her unique ability to integrate science, art, history and community service into day-to-day active learning opportunities makes her lessons exciting and exceptional. Mrs. Salinardi is a highly qualified true *master teacher* who will be greatly missed by students, parents, community and colleagues.

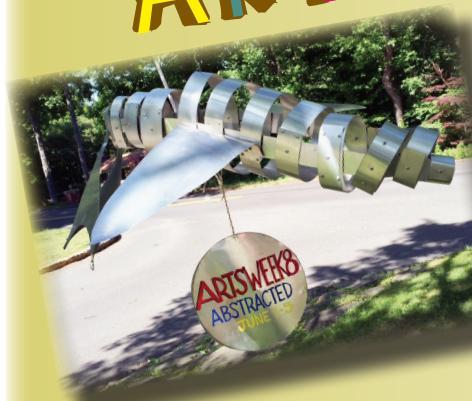


**M**arcie Slepian joined BRS in the 2005-06 school year coming from the Bridgeport Public Schools. She took the position of primary grades art teacher. During her 10 years, Dr. Slepian's lessons have encompassed art exploration, media, aesthetics, art history and problem solving. In a welcoming environment, the walls are alive with student work. She has been especially committed to integrating the academic curriculum into student artwork. Dr. Slepian will pursue new endeavors and we wish her well as she departs BRS.



**P**at Horn joined BRS as a teacher assistant in the 1979/80 school year. For most of her career she served in the special education department but also in grades 3 and 4. Ms. Horn is recognized as a team player, dependable, sensitive to others and someone who takes her responsibilities seriously. Her inquisitiveness and scientific mind helped enhance the learning experiences for children at BRS. After 35 years, Ms. Horn will leave BRS to pursue new adventures and enjoyment in the leisurely life.

## ArtsWeek 8



**A**rtsWeek is a weeklong celebration of the arts held each June. Now in its eighth year, this year's focus was on abstract artists from Kandinsky and Picasso to Pollack and Rothko. BRS students created numerous paintings to display throughout the school. ArtsWeek 8's big event was *ArtsNight*, when parents and

the Woodbridge community came to explore the many galleries of student art, and, if inclined, to create works in one of the open studios throughout the building. Each year every student is involved in a whole school project. This year, *The Towers Project* (right) involved preparing a length of wood to be incorporated into 8 towering sculptures. Math has been an important part in the creation of this sculpture project, from computing the materials needed, budgeting the cost and engineering the logistics of installation.

During the week students enjoyed watching and participating in the BRS Band concert. Students also enjoyed the sounds and sights of *Ginga Brasileira*, a Brazilian dance troupe. Special thanks to Vicky Burford, Linda Acheson, Marcie Slepian, members of the ArtsWeek 8 committee and the BRS PTO.

BRS artwork was also recently displayed in *The Shops at Yale*, coordinated by Mrs. Acheson and Dr. Slepian.



*Inspired by Alexander Calder, this abstract mobile (above) greeted all to BRS for the celebration of the arts during ArtsWeek 8.*



*Detail of one of eight towers that adorn the BRS campus as a result of ArtsWeek 8.*