



# MR. GILBERT'S PARENT UPDATE



Superintendent of Schools  
Woodbridge School District

woodbridge.k12.ct.us May 23, 2017

## Dear Beecher Road School Families,

Is it possible that the end of our successful and exciting school year is just around the corner? What a great year it has been and the final weeks promise a resounding conclusion with a multitude of activities, concerts, celebrations and more. And of course, this week we have ARTSWEEK that is not to be missed. I hope you can attend events and take every opportunity to enjoy the great work of your children and the collective efforts of all in our school.

On a personal note, I would like to thank each of you for making my first year in Woodbridge so welcoming, wonderful and successful. I can easily and passionately say that I am very proud of everyone in this great school – the children, staff and parents – and I'm so thankful to have the opportunity to be your Superintendent.

I would ask that you please take note of the following items:

1. The annual listing of Classroom Teacher Assignments will be posted in one of Ms. Prisco's June Principal Updates. Look for it there.
2. Look for the annual publication of "The Bridge" to come out this summer. We look forward to providing highlights of the 2016-17 school year.
3. Please see Mrs. Prisco's Principal's Message of May 19 for information about your opportunity to review and provide reflections on our work in the area of Mission and Vision. Please, your thoughts are due to us by May 30. See drafts below:

**Mission Statement (Draft):** Beecher Road School is a community that models and inspires the joy of lifelong learning, embraces diversity and celebrates the unique qualities of each person.

**Vision Statement (Draft):** To provide a dynamic educational environment that challenges and empowers students to thrive as innovators and collaborators in preparation for their role as responsible global citizens.

Thank you all, and have a great ending to the 2016-17 school year.

## Upcoming

- **Arts Week** May 22 - 26, 2017; **Family Fun Night** - May 25, 6:30-8:30 PM
- **Spring Band & Choral Concert** - May 24, 6:30 PM
- **Music Groups Adjudication** - May 31.
- **Beecher Night at Quassy** - June 1, 4:30 - 8:30 PM
- **DARE Graduation** - June 2, 9:15 AM
- **6th Grade Graduation** - June 15, 11:30, Amity High School
- **Last Day of School** - June 15 - 1:10 Dismissal
- **Summer Enrichment Program** - June 26 – July 28, 9:00–Noon, Monday – Friday
- **Woodbridge Recreation Programs** June 26 - August 4, 9:00–Noon, Monday – Friday.



## Connecticut State Department of Education Accountability Report

Principal Gina Prisco and Assistant Principal Analisa Sherman summarized and presented the state's

Next Generation Student Accountability Report for 2015-16 to the Board of Education at its March meeting. The report, which includes data from Smarter Balanced Assessments administered in grades 3-6, is an indicator of student success that provides a more complete look at a school or district by looking at multiple indicators. At the elementary level, these indicators include:

- academic achievement and growth
- participation rate on standardized assessments
- chronic absenteeism
- physical fitness

From 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, the Woodbridge School District showed growth in all areas of academic achievement. The District saw significant improvement in the

area of reducing achievement gaps. That term refers to discrepancies in achievement among various student subgroups defined by race, ethnicity, income levels, English language learners and others. We also saw improvements in lowering the percentage of chronically absent children.

Our participation rate on standardized tests, though growing, is below the 95% requirement in several tested areas. We also experienced a slight decline in physical fitness.

Schools are ranked into five descending categories by state law. In the past we were a category 1 school based on achievement and participation. However, because our participation rate remains below 95%, the state has classified us as category 2.

Next steps include analyzing achievement and physical education data to inform instruction and improve student outcomes, and continue strategies to increase participation and address chronic absenteeism on the part of some students.

## Thank you, BRS



The Woodbridge Center held its annual Volunteer Recognition Tea on April 20 at which BRS staff (l - r) Vicki Burford, Sandy Simowitz, Teresa Nakouzi and Superintendent Bob Gilbert accepted Certificates of Appreciation on behalf of the school's students and staff.

BRS was recognized for its work with seniors in such activities as student council-sponsored food drives, holiday and intergenerational visits, meetings and programs.

## Board hears about progress on district's Strategic Plan



An update on the school district's *Strategic Development Plan* was provided to the Board of Education at its May 16 meeting. The district's administrative team, Superintendent Gilbert, Principal Prisco, Assistant Principal Sherman and Special Services Director Kennedy outlined the goals of the plan and progress to date.

The three-year plan (2017-2020), first unveiled in January, a synthesis of feedback from activities and meetings with parents, staff and other stakeholders, provides a *road map* for the district. Five goals provide direction:

1. The District will promote rigorous 21<sup>st</sup> Century academic and social skill standards/ expectations that will enable students to be successful collaborators, critical and creative thinkers, contributing citizens and lifelong learners.
2. The District will provide a student centered and personalized learning environment that promotes innovation, creativity, choice, independence, growth and student ownership.
3. The District will provide professional learning to all faculty and staff as it relates to and supports student learning, development and continuous improvement.
4. The District will promote, build partnerships and celebrate the diversity and multi-dimensional aspects of school, local, regional and global community.
5. The District will maximize the efficiencies of systems and resources that support students in reaching high levels of learning and growth.

The team reported on the work that has started in the areas of *Project Based Learning, Vision and Mission, Curriculum Development Plans, SRBI* (Scientific Research-Based Interventions) and *Professional Learning*.

The full copy of the Strategic Plan can be accessed on the district website on the Superintendent's page.



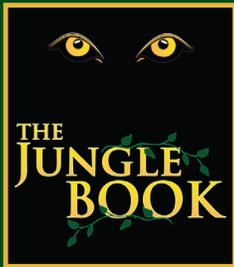
# WE WANT YOU!

- **Who:** interested parents and community members
- **What:** needed for future *Strategic Plan* initiatives
- **Why:** to assist and support our efforts to address the Strategic Plan initiatives around community, diversity and enhancing aesthetics
- **How:** meet as a committee
- **When:** this fall
- **Where:** at BRS

Next fall, we hope to begin work in the areas of *Celebrating our Strengths of Community and Diversity* and *Enhancing the Aesthetics of our Building*.

Interested? Please email Marsha Degennaro at [mdegennaro@woodbridgeps.org](mailto:mdegennaro@woodbridgeps.org)

## BRS Extended Day Performance Mesmerizes Audiences



**J**ungle Book, the classic children's story, was brought to life at the Beecher Theater on March 30 and 31 by a cast of 40 student actors, singers

and dancers. The *Extended Day Program Drama Club* students had been working on this production for months. Not only were parents, staff and children involved in the on-stage aspects of the show but also with the numerous behind the scenes tasks. Sets, costumes, lighting and performers came together to transform the stage and thrill a packed house.

*Jungle Book* was directed by Teresa Ramia, Jen Cooper, B. J. Ahern and Jeanne Ciarleglio.



Ms. Sherman (l) & Ms. Prisco accept award

Each year the *Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE)* sponsors a *Communications Awards* program inviting school districts to submit examples of communications in a variety of areas. Categories include newsletters, curriculum and budget documents, electronic presentations, student handbooks and more. The entries are judged by professionals using specific criteria.

Woodbridge has a history of excellent communications and has won numerous CABE Communication Awards through the years. Updated annually by Ms. Prisco and Ms. Sherman, this year the *2016-2017 BRS Parent Student Handbook* won the top award in the handbook category.

