



Booth Free School

Star Tracks

April 2019



A Note from the Principal...

Dear Parent/Guardians,

Although it is April, and spring is officially here, the challenges posed by this winter's weather should be diminishing soon! The most recent warmer weather has allowed us to see our grass again and a few tips of crocus and daffodils beginning to peek through. Soon we will be able to open our windows and smell the wonderful fresh air. Keeping our students' minds on the academics will be challenging as they too want to get outside and run around. The staff will use their wonderful creative talents to keep them focused on the tasks presented to them. With such dedicated and talented staff, I am certain that this challenge will be conquered.



Last month, fifteen acts participated in the Sixth Annual Booth Free School Has Talent Show. The school community extends a thank you to our PTO for sponsoring this event and to our coordinators, Liz Kearney, Tracy Palumbo, and Stephanie Kolnick as well as our Sound Technician, Mike Palumbo. Each year this event grows in talent and it is amazing to see our students shine. Booth Free singers, dancers and a pianist dazzled the crowd. It was an amazing evening!

Booth Free School community is very proud of fifth grader, Bruna Libanio whose 2018-2019 Connecticut Fire Prevention poster has been recognized as a County Winner.



In recognition of this achievement, an Award Presentation Luncheon was held on March 28th. Bruna and her family attended along with school representation. Congratulations Bruna!



On March 20th our fifth graders attended a Career Fair hosted by Shepaug. This event was a huge success as nearly forty different careers were represented. Our students enjoyed mingling with their peers from Burnham and Washington Primary. It is never too soon to begin to think about passions and future endeavors.

On April 4th incoming kindergarten parents/guardians and students are invited to attend a Meet and Greet Kindergarten Readiness Program. It will be held at Booth Free School at 9:30 a.m. An introductory presentation will kick off the program, followed by a visitation to the kindergarten classroom by students and a bit of outdoor play (weather permitting) and wrapping up with a

presentation by the teacher. The visit will focus on how to prepare incoming kindergarteners for school and for a successful first year. The staff and I look forward to welcoming our new students to the Booth community.

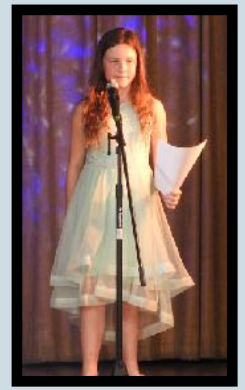
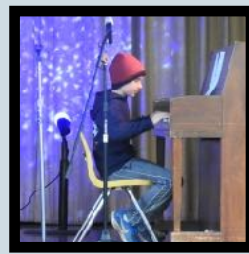
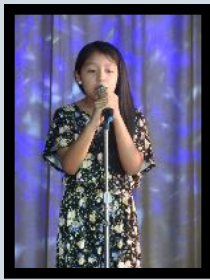
Budget season is upon us. The budget for next year has been presented to the Board of Education and is available to the taxpayers. It can be located on the district's website. There will be a District Budget Hearing at 7 o'clock on Monday, April 1, 2019 at the Shepaug Middle/High School. The Annual District Meeting will be held on May 6, 2019, and the Budget Referendum is scheduled to take place on May 7, 2019.

Finally, as we move into warmer weather and longer hours of daylight, please continue to stress the importance of homework and time management. Homework continues throughout the year, and at times a child may need a bit more guidance in planning a busy afternoon or evening schedule. Your support is greatly appreciated.

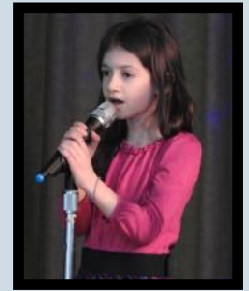
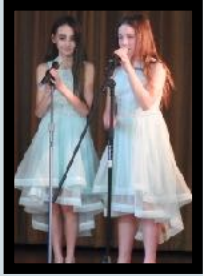
Sincerely,
Cathy G. Colella
Principal

APRIL DATES TO REMEMBER

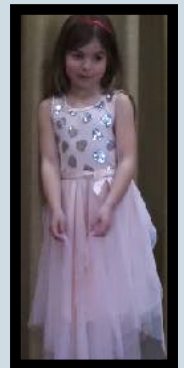
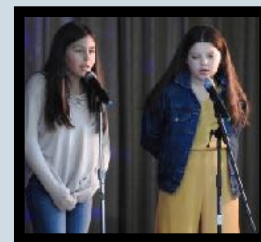
- 4/1 District Budget Hearing, 7:00 PM
- 4/1,3,5 For the Birds! Audubon Program
- 4/3 Spring Photo Day
- 4/4 Kindergarten Meet & Greet, 9:30-10:30 AM
- 4/8 Board of Education Meeting, Business, 7:00
- 4/8-9 Kindness Tree Mosaic Tile Painting, 10:00 AM
- 4/9 Snow Monster Visits BFS, 2:15 PM
- 4/10 Grade 4 Trip to CT Science Center
- 4/10 PTO Meeting, 6:30 PM
- 4/11 Music Visitation Grade 3
- 4/12 Music Visitation Grades K, 1, 2, 4, 5
- 4/12 Grade 3 Trip to Hartford
- 4/15-19 Spring Recess, School Closed
- 4/22 Board of Education Meeting, Education, 7:00 PM



Booth Free School's 6th Annual Talent Show Participants:



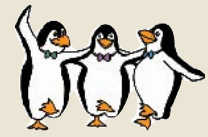
Dayanna
 Paige
 Diandra
 2019 Talent Show
 Emily
 Carolyn
 William
 Madelyn
 Bruna
 Brianna
 Maddison
 Nora
 Natalie
 Maya
 Lucy
 Samantha
 Wylden
 Darya
 Shannon
 Antonio
 Tyler
 Lyla
 Celeste
 Jade





Grade 1

Penguins, Penguins, Everywhere!

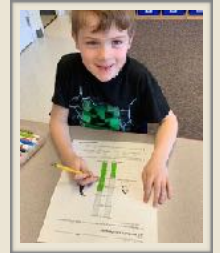


With its black and white "tuxedo" and cute waddle, the penguin is one of those animals that first graders find hard to resist. During these cold winter months, we are learning all about these little flightless birds. Here is a glimpse of how students are learning about them across the curriculum in Mrs. Tierney's first grade classroom.

In **Science**, students are learning about the special characteristics of penguins that make them different from other birds and help them adapt to their environment. They are also learning about the different types of penguins, their habitats, what they eat and their life cycles.



In **Social Studies**, children are practicing mapping skills to learn about the places where different types of penguins live. The first graders were surprised to learn that there are several types of warm weather penguins that live in South America and Australia.



In **Math**, we are measuring, comparing, ordering two-digit numbers, writing inequality statements, finding differences, and working on a number line. In the context of a pretend trip to Antarctica, students got their heights measured for snowsuits and graphed the results. The class also recorded the heights of two other penguins: the rockhopper and the king. Students made measuring strips and cut string lengths to show the two heights and we have been using them to order and compare numbers and find differences.



In **Language Arts**, kids are reading and writing about penguins. We have a collection of poems along with many fiction and nonfiction books about penguins. The nonfiction books have given the perfect opportunity for us to learn about the features found in informational texts, such as maps, glossaries and diagrams. We have been watching a live Penguin Cam and writing about their observations. We are using fiction texts to work on story maps, sequence and characters. This also ties in nicely to our nonfiction writing in which students are working cooperatively to research and write a report about a specific type of penguin.



First graders are having a lot of fun learning about penguins while practicing skills in every subject!

Grade 3

Persevering



Even as the snow fades and the birds start chirping, our third graders continue to persevere in every subject!



They have become quite tech-savvy on their Chromebooks, easily navigating Drive and Slides, and completing their now have "expert authors" on dolphins, a few. In science, we are exploring the human characteristics are influenced by environment.

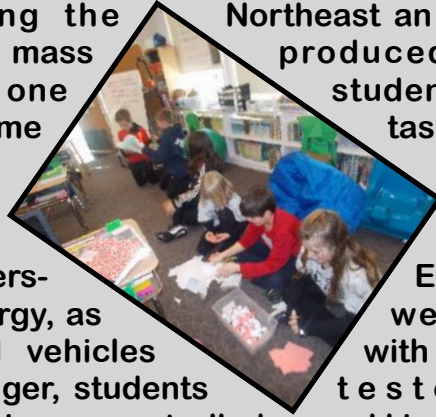


through different sites, using Google Informational Chapter Books. We baseball, and Minecraft, to name just variation of traits and how many both our inherited traits and the

Grade 4

Classroom Happenings....

Mrs. Russell's students are exploring the regions of the United States. The Northeast Region was the birthplace of American factories. Factories thrived in areas with sufficient water to power their machines, making the Northeast an ideal location. Students also have learned about the efficiency of mass produced, interchangeable parts. We compared the production of one assembly line performing the same task. Our assembly line clearly was more efficient!



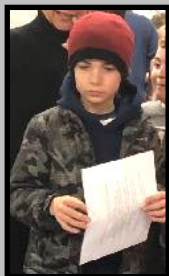
Our fourth grade engineers have been designing vehicle restraint systems to protect their passengers- Eggbert and Eggberta. After studying potential and kinetic energy, as well as energy transfer during collisions, students constructed vehicles with restraint systems. Using a raw egg as a passenger, students tested their designs during a controlled collision. This experiment provided first hand experience for the testing, evaluation, and revision. While we had a few "casualties" in round one, after revisions were made, Eggbert and Eggberta were happy to return, intact, to the comfort of their carton. Congratulations to our engineers!



Grade 5

Biomes and Career Fair

As part of their non-fiction reading and writing units, the fifth graders have spent the last few weeks working on a research project on a biome of their choice. This ties in well with the unit on Ecosystems in Science. In this unit we have learned the best conditions to grow mold, played with earthworms as we discovered the role the worms play in decomposing dead material and releasing nutrients into the soil, and finally discovered the role of consumers in an ecosystem as the students dissected an owl pellet.



The fifth graders also enjoyed a trip to Shepaug Valley High School this month to participate in the Career Fair. Students were able to talk to many participating men and women about future career paths.



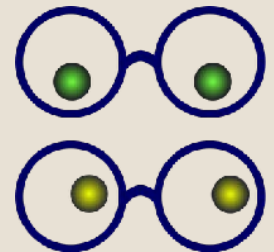


Notes and News from the Nurse. . .

Vision Awareness

Your child's eyes are constantly in use in the classroom and at play. The following are some vision problem warning signs. Ask the school nurse to have your child screened at school or check with your doctor for further advice if you notice any of these signs.

- Eyes turning inward (crossing) or outward
- Squinting or tending to rub eyes
- Headaches
- Blurred or double vision
- Losing place while reading or using finger to maintain place when reading
- Not doing as well in schoolwork as before or consistently performs below potential
- Avoiding close work or holding reading material closer than normal
- Eyes tire when reading or doing school work
- Turning or tilting head to use one eye only
- Making frequent reversals when reading or writing



Here are some examples of how we encourage healthy habits here at Booth Free School with healthy lunches and non-food birthday celebrations:



Jackson shared legos with his classmates for a healthy way to celebrate his birthday using a non-food activity. A fun time was had by all!

Dental Visit



On March 28th, our school community was treated to a visit from Caceci Family Dentistry. Dr. Matt Caceci and dental hygienist, Wendy Bonomonte, spent time with each classroom going over many important things about healthy teeth.



Our students played an interactive “true/false” game as a fun way to explore many great facts about teeth and keeping them healthy. The team went over when to brush your teeth, how to floss and nutrition. They had a model of teeth and toothbrush brushing. Dr. Caceci and Wendy demonstrated good teeth too!



Our students were very engaged, excited and had hands on with a large teddy bear who had a teddy bear who brushed his teeth properly.

Our students were very involved, and about the things they were learning during the program. There were a lot of wonderful questions asked and answered. This was a fun program for our students.



Celebrating Booth Free School's Administrative Professional, Laura Horrigan!

Mrs. Horrigan brightens each day with her warm, gentle and caring greetings. She helps to make our days safe and productive. Please be sure to wish Mrs. Horrigan a wonderful day on Wednesday,



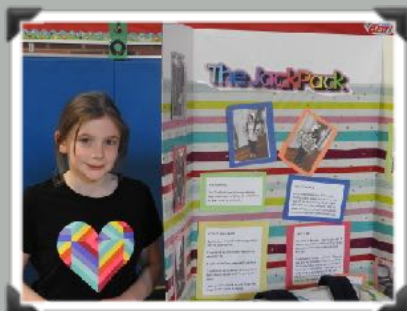
day with her warm, gentle and make our days safe and wish Mrs. Horrigan a April 24th!

Thank you, Mrs. Horrigan, for all that you do for Booth Free School!



“Happy Administrative Professionals Day”,
Mrs. Horrigan!





BFS 4th Annual Invention Convention!

Our Booth Free inventors showcased their many talents at our 4th Annual Invention Convention. After eight weeks of problem-solving, experimenting, and working through the Engineering Design Process, students shone brightly on March 26th. It was an evening full of ingenuity and innovation. After a difficult task of choosing only one winner, the judges had Isla Beckstrom's Cat Caller heading to the Final CIC Competition on May 4th at UConn.

We are so very proud of every inventor's perseverance and creativity and know that next year will bring forth just as much, if not more excitement and inspiration!



Words from the Library from Mrs. Gordon



Happy Spring from the Booth Free School Library!

April is a gloriously diverse literary month, and I look forward to planting many colorful seeds of reading discovery in our students to (sow) their love of reading blossoms and blooms.

April is National Poetry Month, I will be exposing students to a variety of poetic forms, themes and devices. In order to actively engage the children, I will be hosting several month long incentives meant to encourage creativity and genre exploration. Make sure to stop by during the month to take a look at the "Wall of Poetry" BFS will be building as well as the library's amazing collection of poetry that will be on display. Additionally, the center table will feature copies of the anthology series "a celebration of poets" which feature the published poems of current and previous Booth students. Ultimately, by the end of the month, all BFS student's will have created an original poem that I will submit for publication!

In addition to being National Poetry Month, April is also host to these awesome literary-focused celebrations:

4/2: Children's Book Day

4/4: National School Librarian Day

4/5: National Read A Roadmap Day

Second Week of April: National Library Week: First sponsored in 1958, National Library Week is a national observance sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA) and libraries across the country each April. It is a time to celebrate the contributions of our nation's libraries and librarians and to promote library use and support. All types of libraries -- school, public, academic and special -- participate.

4/10: Encourage a Young Writer Day

4/12: D.E.A.R. Day: D.E.A.R. stands for "Drop Everything and Read," designed to remind folks of all ages to make reading a priority activity in their lives. You may remember that Beverly Cleary wrote about D.E.A.R. in Ramona Quimby, Age 8. Since then, "Drop Everything and Read" programs have been held nationwide on April 12th in honor of Mrs. Cleary's birthday.

4/13: National Scrabble Day

4/16: National Librarian Day

4/17: National Haiku Poetry Day

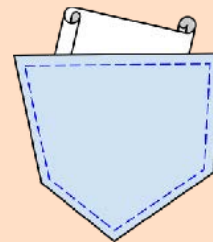
4/18: National Poem In Your Pocket Day

4/23: World Book and Copyright Day

4/27: National Tell A Story Day

Last Saturday in April: Independent Bookstore Day

4/28: National Great Poetry Reading



I encourage everyone to maximize yours and your children's exposure to reading by finding ways to participate in as many of these amazing events as possible!

Booth's brave

Often observative

Offerings, odes & opuses

Tributes to transitory travels & treasures,

Happy homages; horizontal hangings

Prosaic photographs

Opine

Ephemeral elegies that

Mitigates the maternal melancholy

Students swift seasonal shifts set



Music with Mr. Bartfield



The students at Booth Free School have been growing musically each week. They have continued to build on the musical skills that they started at the beginning of the year, while also learning new skills. The kindergarten through second grade students have most recently been working on taking turns improvising a pattern on the xylophone for another student to match the pitch with his/her voice. They have also been working on moving freely to classical music. So far we have listened to pieces written by Mozart, Beethoven, Bizet, Saint-Saens,



and Brahms. The kindergarten students were also introduced to playing the djembe (a type of drum from West Africa). The 1st and 2nd grade students have been working on reading and notating rhythms. Second grade has also learned the lines and spaces on the treble clef staff. The 3rd graders have been learning the recorder. They have already learned nine notes, and can play "Hot Cross Buns" and "Mary Had a Little Lamb." They are also working on a song to accompany the chorus for the spring concert. The 4th and 5th grade students have spent



some time in class using the xylophone to compose their own songs. At least two of these songs will be played by the 4th/5th grade band at the spring concert. The 5th graders have been learning the ukulele. They have learned between four and six chords and are also working on different strumming patterns. They have even started to learn how to play a single-note "lead" line for a song they have been learning.



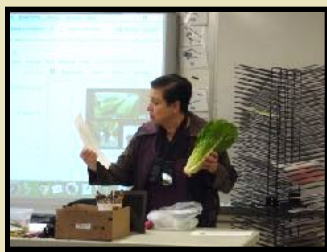
We hope to see you all at the spring concert on May 16th where the students will get to show what they have learned in music.



Principal's Weekly Schedule



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
A.M. Booth Free	A.M. Burnham	A.M. Booth Free	A.M. Booth Free	A.M. Burnham
P.M. Burnham	P.M. Burnham	P.M. Booth Free	P.M. Burnham	P.M. Booth Free



Roxbury-Bridgewater Garden Club Visits Booth Free and Burnham Schools

Each year the Roxbury-Bridgewater Garden Club partners with our schools to provide enrichment opportunities. This year's focus is on gardening, stimulating our students' knowledge and love of gardening. Master Gardener, Mrs. Adrienne Caruso, of the Roxbury-Bridgewater Garden Club, began this year's program with a visit to Booth Free School and Burnham School to guest-teach botanical watercolor painting to K-5 students during their scheduled art classes. Also assisting Mrs. Caruso were her husband Mr. Joe Caruso, Mrs. Nina Shimer, and Mr. Rudy Simari. Each student completed a beautiful painting of lettuce or radishes. These works will be framed and later exhibited at each town's library during the month June. The Roxbury-Bridgewater Garden Club will be returning to the schools later in the spring to help students plant potatoes for a late-summer harvest, and to oversee the planting of lettuce and radish seeds. Being early crop vegetables, the lettuce and radishes should be ready for a mid-June harvest before the end of the school year.



ACE Happenings

We have GROWN!

As the ACE Program nears the end of our fourth year in operation, the days of 3-5 children attending our afternoon program are a distant memory. Now, we often have days with 13-18 children in attendance, along with three ACE staff on duty. As we grow, we continue to be blessed with staff that are dedicated to the well-being of children in our community. Claire Hagen and



Megan Piersall, both graduates of the Region 12 school system, have joined the ACE staff. “Miss Claire” and “Miss Megan” are both currently working in Region 12 schools; we are grateful for the enthusiasm and creativity they bring to ACE. All of the ACE staff are highly trained, we care deeply about children



and we are always ready to help your child with homework, play indoors and outdoors with them, as well as do arts and crafts with them.

As our program continues to grow, we ask that parents needing to use the program let ACE know of their daily or weekly childcare needs as soon as possible. Please email ACE at ACEBridgewater@gmail.com with your childcare needs as soon as you know them. We always anticipate some drop-ins to the program, but due to the larger number of children in the program any advance notice that you can provide to ACE regarding your childcare needs greatly aids ACE in our staff planning.

We wish you and your family a happy and healthy Spring.



Booth Free School's Campaign of Caring



In conjunction with Roxbury Town Hall, Booth Free School Student Council has reached out to support the St. Vincent de Paul Homeless Shelter. This shelter hosts a large number of young families and therefore needs a continuous supply of diapers and wipes. BFS Student Council jumped into action to help fill in some gaps.

The Booth Free School Student Council organized a drive to assist the shelter. Beginning Monday, February 4, 2019, the Booth Free School families sent in diapers and/or wipes for these families. Our drive ended Wednesday, February 27th and shortly thereafter a representative of the shelter gratefully accepted our donation. Once again, our wonderful students and families reached out to aid our greater community.



Good Character Traits:

(Referenced in Board of Education Policy #0210.3)

Region 12 is dedicated to strengthening the character of our students by encouraging a consistent set of ethical values that direct and guide behavioral choices. These universal values, which transcend political, religious, cultural, and the Golden Rule encompasses economic differences, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Therefore, good Character Traits are essential to the learning process. We work throughout the year in developing the following:

- Trustworthiness
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Fairness
- Caring
- Citizenship

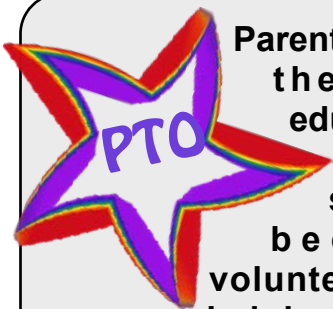


Good conduct is synonymous with good citizenship. Students are expected to exercise good citizenship at all times while in school, attending school-related activities and after school activities conducted at the school. This includes showing respect for the rights of others and regard for personal and school property. Students should strive to contribute to the climate of the school by being courteous and well mannered.

Booth Free School also utilizes The Second Step Program to promote social skills necessary to be a caring community. Additionally, grades three through five have access to a second program, Steps to Respect when needed.

It is our hope that the power and influence of the school-family partnership will provide consistent messages to our students regarding the development of positive student behaviors and thus, improve student learning.

Clip Art in this newsletter from: <https://openclipart.org/>



Parents are our partners in the important job of educating all our children. I urge you to attend and support the PTO, become a member, volunteer, and take part in helping your child to grow academically. PTO meetings will be held each month at 6:30 p.m. The next scheduled PTO meeting is April 10th.

Visit Our Website!

Our web address is www.region-12.org. Once you are at the district's home page you can visit Booth Free School's website. The staff will be adding information regularly. Please use it as an additional resource for information gathering.



Report to PARENTS

Effective Homework Help

Students with parents who are involved in their education are more likely to earn higher grades, adapt well to school, and pass their classes. But is there a point when parents can be too involved—specifically, with homework? Consider these scenarios:

- Your child's big science project is due tomorrow, but her schedule has been so busy lately that she hasn't had time to finish it herself. You want her to get a good grade, so you end up doing most of the work for her.
- Your daughter's entry for a school poetry competition seems pretty bad so far. You suggest phrases that sound better. When the awards are announced, your daughter comes home and says, "We won!"
- Your son's math homework packet is a big part of his grade, but he's having trouble with a few of the concepts. You wonder if it's okay to help him with some of the answers?



If parents end up taking over homework tasks—as in the first two examples—involvement can quickly turn into interference. Use these strategies to reasonably support your child as he or she tackles assignments.

First, create conditions conducive to learning. Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit space to do work, away from the TV or other distractions.

Help your child learn time management. Set a time each day for doing homework, and block off time on the weekends for working on big projects. Make sure your child has a planner. Create a visual calendar at home to help your child keep track of assignments.

Be positive. If your child is losing steam while completing homework, reinforce the importance of school. If your child is frustrated with a project or a tough new concept, be encouraging.

Guide, don't do. Don't do homework for your child. Instead, help your child understand assignments by discussing concepts. Have your child walk you through the way he or she learned to solve a problem, and try to come up with a hands-on method to practice it.

For instance, if your child is struggling with basic division, gather pennies or paper clips, count the total, and, together, divide them into groups of five, six, or seven.

Brainstorm together. Challenge your child to come up with a variety of ideas for projects. If your child is

writing a poem, brainstorm ideas he or she could write about rather than telling him or her what to say.

When your child does homework, you should do work, too. If she is reading an essay, you can read the newspaper. If he is working on math problems, you can balance your checkbook. This shows your child that the skills he or she is learning are related to adult tasks.

Stay informed. Talk with your child's teacher. If your child is consistently having trouble with a specific topic, let the teacher know.

Web Resources

The **National PTA's Homework Help Web page** offers strategies to help parents cut homework stress and maximize learning.
<http://bit.ly/PTAhomeworkhelp>

Visit the **Department of Education's homework portal** for resources on study skills and helping kids get organized.
www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/homework