



THE B R I D G E



The Education Report of
the Woodbridge School
District

summer 2018
no. 12

woodbridge.k12.ct.us



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MISSION STATEMENT

Beecher Road School is a caring, creative community that models and inspires the joy of lifelong learning, embraces diversity and celebrates the unique qualities of each person.

VISION STATEMENT

To provide a dynamic educational environment that challenges and empowers students to persevere as innovators and collaborators in preparation for their role as responsible global citizens.



To the Citizens of Woodbridge,

It is an honor and privilege to prepare and distribute this annual educational report to the citizens and taxpayers of Woodbridge. Beecher Road School is proud and excited to update you on the work and success of our students, staff and programs. At the same time, we are appreciative of the steadfast support that you, as a

town, provide to The Woodbridge School District each year. Anecdotaly, I am constantly humbled at the number of residents I speak to each year who say: "We love Beecher! Our kids went there and had a great education. We are so glad the tradition continues."

Inside **THE BRIDGE** you will find our "road map" to success, as seen through our Strategic Plan (page 2), and you will find evidence of how the Strategic Plan goals and initiatives are moving forward. In addition, **THE BRIDGE** contains informative entries on key instructional areas (pages 3-8) as well as exciting information on programs and initiatives beyond the classroom (pages 9-12). With our vision to provide a "dynamic educational environment" that ultimately "challenges and empowers students," you will see the continued focus on academic excellence, strong social and emotional development and preparation of our students as the leaders of tomorrow.

I cannot emphasize enough my sincere appreciation to the citizens, town leaders, parents and staff for their strong support of Beecher Road School. In a year that once again has seen the uncertainty of funding at federal and state levels, Woodbridge continues to display tremendous financial commitment to our outstanding elementary program. This ongoing commitment has its foundation in the strong partnership between our town and school leaders. In a time when most districts are experiencing flat or declining enrollments, it is no surprise to see that Woodbridge is one of the few districts that is seeing enrollment growth – 6.5 % in one year.

Enjoy reading THE BRIDGE as you re-discover the ways our amazing school is preparing our students to become the leaders and "responsible global citizens" of tomorrow. ~

Robert F. "Bob" Gilbert, Superintendent of Schools





Strategic Planning

The Road Ahead

During the 2016 – 17 school year, the District set out to renew and develop plans for the future. As a result of Superintendent Gilbert's entry plan activities, conversations with stakeholders and work with an expanded planning committee, the *Strategic Development Plan* was created and subsequently adopted by the Board of Education. The plan targets five specific areas with the following goals and established priorities.

Throughout **THE BRIDGE**, you will find examples of how these goals and priorities have come to life in the classroom and beyond.

1 THE DISTRICT WILL **PROMOTE RIGOROUS 21ST CENTURY ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL SKILL STANDARDS/EXPECTATIONS** THAT WILL ENABLE STUDENTS TO BE SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATORS, CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKERS, CONTRIBUTING CITIZENS AND LIFELONG LEARNERS.

Priorities:

- Develop a district Vision and Mission that supports 21st century learning
- Develop a shared vision/expectation of high quality student work through curriculum development process
- Develop a strategy and structure for curriculum review/revision

2 THE DISTRICT WILL **PROVIDE A STUDENT CENTERED AND PERSONALIZED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT** THAT PROMOTES INNOVATION, CREATIVITY, CHOICE, INDEPENDENCE, GROWTH AND STUDENT OWNERSHIP.

Priorities:

- Establish a School-Wide Enrichment Model (SEM) that focuses on enrichment for all students and curriculum compacting for early mastery students
- Build a common understanding of an implementation plan for Project Based Learning (PBL)
- Establish a sixth grade *capstone project* that provides a K-6 culminating learning experience

3 THE DISTRICT WILL **PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING TO ALL FACULTY AND STAFF** AS IT RELATES TO AND SUPPORTS STUDENT LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.

Priorities:

- Build an understanding and implementation of the Professional Learning Community (PLC) model
- Place a priority on the systematic and consistent use of embedded professional learning experiences
- Develop a differentiated professional learning plan that advances teaching, learning and the goals of the district

4 THE DISTRICT WILL **BUILD PARTNERSHIPS, PROMOTE AND CELEBRATE THE DIVERSITY AND MULTI-DIMENSIONAL ASPECTS OF SCHOOL, LOCAL, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL COMMUNITY.**

Priorities:

- Enhance sense of community within the school
- Form partnerships and service opportunities within the local community
- Build partnerships with educators regionally and globally
- Promote social emotional support through safe school climate plan and other methods

5 THE DISTRICT WILL **MAXIMIZE THE EFFICIENCIES OF SYSTEMS AND RESOURCES** THAT SUPPORT STUDENTS IN REACHING HIGH LEVELS OF LEARNING AND GROWTH

Priorities:

- Restructure SRBI model and refine special education service delivery to maximize efficiency and ensure comprehensiveness/coherence
- Create a plan to enhance building aesthetics with a student-centered focus
- Review and revise roles, responsibilities, processes and structures to best support student learning and needs



Technology is part of daily life. It starts here.

BRS is unique, not only in the amount of technology we offer, but also in the way it is applied. We begin our explorations of technology in kindergarten. Students are taught the parts and fundamental skills of using a computer. Over the course of the year, they progress into the basics of coding using the program *Kodable*.

The concepts of coding continue to be built in first grade using *MicroWorlds Jr.* No reading is necessary. It's easy to learn and use, with point and click operations and child friendly symbols. Second grade students learn the importance of proper typing techniques. At BRS, we use *Type to Learn*, an interactive, self-paced program to introduce and reinforce proper ergonomics and finger position. Throughout the year, students collect data from a monthly typing test. They then learn charting, graphing and word processing skills by inserting the data into a spreadsheet, giving them a visual representation of their individual progress. Third graders revisit *Type to Learn*, and are introduced to word processing skills through projects and presentations and expand coding skills through the use of *Scratch*. This fun and engaging program enables students to create interactive games and animations through the use of block coding that helps young people learn to think creatively, reason systematically, and work collaboratively — essential skills for life in the 21st century.

Fourth grade focuses on *digital citizenship*. Students use their cumulative skills to create presentations on subtopics including internet safety, computer viruses, copyright



Screen shot of a coding program called Scratch

laws, digital footprints, digital etiquette and cyberbullying. Each of these areas is explored in depth through group discussions, debates, activities and small group work. Students in both third and fourth grades spend time exploring coding and robotics by working with Ozobots, tiny robots that use optical sensors to read and follow color-based codes created by the students. This past year, we introduced *Open Tech Lab* for our fifth and sixth grade students. Students are able to sign up based on their schedules. Open Tech Lab provides an opportunity to independently explore areas of technology such as coding, robotics and animation.

Technology does not stop at the end of the regular school day. We are excited to offer 3D printing to students in both our Extended Day and Summer Enrichment Programs. Through this program students learn how to manipulate and alter shapes to design, build and ultimately print their own creations. It is available to students in grades two through six as a weekly class through the Extended Day program, and as an intensive one week class through Summer Enrichment. ~



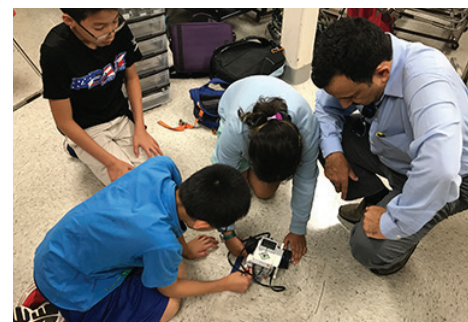
Sonnet 44?

Mr. Chase leads a group of young poets from grades 3-6 who meet after school to explore the power of words. They focus on diction, crafting powerful metaphors, rhythm and applying these techniques to various verse forms: ballads, two voice poems, poems of perspective, and a collection of poetry on colors. Their work is published in *Anthologia*, a collection of poems and illustrations. ~



Learning buddies

Kindergarten and sixth grade students at the Yale Center for British Arts. The trip follows lessons about how writers and artists both tell stories. The study reinforces observational skills and offers opportunities for collaborative work. ~



Robotics teams in our after school Extended Day program are taught by parent volunteers who are in that field. Student teams deepen their understanding of robotics, compete with others on weekends, and have been invited to showcase their work at the annual CAPSS/CABE Convention attended by Superintendents, Board Members and other education leaders. ~



MUSIC

Music activities involve a team of people coming together with a common purpose. Supportive parents, enthusiastic students, accomplished staff members, passionate administrators, a supportive community and an educationally sound philosophy are all necessary to do what we do.

General music, a discipline that is content rich, crosses multiple subjects, serves as a means of communication and expression and involves developing many skills. Starting in kindergarten, students' artistic potential is encouraged by learning a variety of songs, dances and movement.

By third and fourth grade, students augment their abilities to read and write music culminating in expressing their own musical thoughts and ideas through writing, then performing them for others. In every grade students are engaged in the fundamental processes of creating, performing and responding.

Performing is very much a part of the music program. In the fall the Marching Band performed for events like Veterans Day at school, as well as quite different events like the Bridgeport Sound Tigers Professional Hockey Game and the Halloween Hoot. The music honor society, TRI-M, continued with its own traditions with social activity fun nights here on campus.

BRS musicians also performed off campus. This winter, six students were selected for the Middle School Southern Regional Festival (Grades 6-8). This is a great honor for the students as they have the opportunity to play alongside other excellent musicians from the southern Connecticut region.

In April, BRS joined the first Connecticut Music Educators Association (CEMA) Elementary Honors Band and Elementary Honors Orchestra (photo at bottom of page). Students were nominated by their music teachers for the program and Beecher had among the highest representation in the state with nine students selected. These students worked at the CMEA Conference during their school vacation and their dedication paid off with a wonderful musical experience and performance at the marquee event for music education in Connecticut. This spring, BRS hosted the 13th Annual Adjudication. Throughout the year, the students maintained exceptional levels of performance and established wonderful benchmarks for the program, most notably the Platinum and Gold Medal Awards they earned. This year five instrumentalists auditioned and made the cut for the CMEA



Southern Region Festival with great performances by Advanced Band, Jazz Ensemble, String Ensemble and Chamber Ensembles. Choral singing, the other important part of the music program at BRS, had a wonderful year in performance. In addition to the Winter and Spring Concerts, there were community performances for Veterans Day and the Courtyard Cabaret Concert Inter-District performance with Bethany Community School and Amity Middle School Bethany. (photo above). At the spring music adjudication event, the BRS Chorus earned a gold medal for its performance. At other noteworthy performances, the CMEA Southern Regional Middle School festivals, several BRS vocalists achieved recognition. Kudos to all our students performers. ~



In May, the kindergarten team was very excited to welcome almost 100 new kindergarten students to Beecher. During the winter months, the team worked with the Administration to design the new Kindergarten Orientation Program to help prepare children for a positive start to their learning journey, and to provide families with important information regarding the upcoming school year.

New students were able to visit and participate in a variety of activities within a kindergarten classroom. This visit provided children an opportunity to begin building the foundation that will enable them to experience a happy, exciting and successful school experience. ~

Good Question!

What do you do with obsolete computer and tech equipment?

We have been searching and found recycling vendors who will compensate us for items that have become obsolete. This process has helped save the district funds and keep current technology available for student and teacher use.





MATH



Making bluebird nesting boxes demands real-world measurements

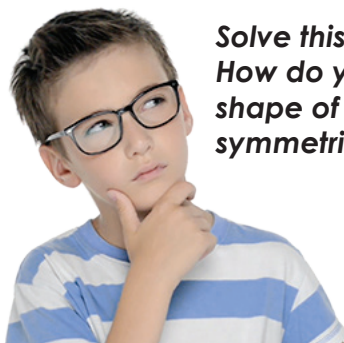
curriculum compacting

There are students who have already mastered some of the concepts taught within a grade level curriculum; how do we meet the needs of these students? An answer: *curriculum compacting*.

Curriculum compacting is an approach for documenting, planning, and providing enrichment and/or deeper learning for gifted students or those with the potential to go beyond the common curricular expectations.

Currently, our fourth grade teachers are using curriculum compacting as a part of their mathematics workshop. Moving forward, other grade levels will implement protocols and processes for curriculum compacting as well.

The goals of curriculum compacting are to guarantee proficiency in the grade level content and to create a more rigorous experience by providing enrichment opportunities. Students engage in enrichment opportunities in many ways including completing independent projects and engaging in partner work to further their skills. The fourth grade team, with the support of our math specialists, have worked to develop this approach, identify resources to support it and continue to evaluate it. ~



Solve this problem:

How do you fit 900 people inside the shape of a 5-petal flower – and keep it all symmetrical for the photographer?

Fourth and fifth grade TAG* math students, under the guidance of teachers Ms. Molot and Mrs. Krawec, made a flower grow at BRS, a very big flower.

They used graph paper to calculate how much space each person in the building would take up to form their flower. Based on their calculations the students figured out that they needed a circle with a radius of nine feet to accommodate one full grade of students and teachers. Outside they drove a stake into the ground where they wanted the center of the flower to be, measured out a nine foot rope and tied it to the stake. They pulled the rope tight and walked in a circle around the stake, spraying paint as they walked. Students took this petal template and placed it against the curve of the circle and spray painted around it, doing this five times to create five petals. Finally, the whole school came out to the playground and the TAG students organized everybody so they fit into the flower outline and a photo was snapped. A great way to celebrate the ArtsWeek theme “The Garden” and to build community. ~

* talented and gifted program

Problem solved: 900 people on the grass in the shape of a symmetrical 5-petal flower. Shoot the picture!



Read Across America is a nationwide day to celebrate and promote the importance of reading. It is sponsored annually by the National Education Association on March 2, Dr. Seuss's birthday.

BRS library teachers organized and hosted 24 guest readers including the Chief of Police, a State Senator and Representatives, Board of Education and PTO members, other Woodbridge Town officials and a visiting superintendent.

The guest readers were welcomed into classrooms to read picture books with our students and share their own love of reading. The Library extended the “Day” to a week of reading activities such as enjoying digital e-books on Tumblebooks, reading in new and different places and a Non-Fiction Day. In collaboration, the Art and Library staff developed a giant interactive book where students created and displayed Post-its detailing a favorite book or character. ~



AMERICAN HISTORY

treats, heard a story about school long ago and used crayons to create leaf rubbings.

A highlight for many students was to experience an 18th century style lesson. The children loved sitting in the authentic desks and benches pretending to be students from long ago with our own BRS “schoolmarms” Miss Crocco and Mrs. Patrick. Students showed their manners to the teachers by bowing and curtsying and engaged in an old-fashioned spelling lesson using slates and chalk.

On hand to greet the families were Woodbridge First Selectman Beth Heller, State Senator George Logan, and Board of Education and Historical Society Member Lynn Piascyk.

The Old South Schoolhouse was officially reopened as a historic treasure in 2013. It is located at 1191 Johnson Road, Woodbridge. ~

BRS librarians partnered with the Amity and Woodbridge Historical Society’s Children’s Day at the Old South Schoolhouse. To engage families in Woodbridge’s rich history, this open-house-style event was held in May. Along with getting to explore this historic Woodbridge treasure built in 1877, Beecher families and local officials participated in old-fashioned recess games like stilts and sack races, learned calligraphy, enjoyed sweet



Complexity is the first word that comes to mind to characterize the

World Language program at BRS. It’s not just about reading, or writing, or listening, or speaking or Spanish culture. World

Language includes all of these separate but overlapping skills.

BRS students start tackling this complex of skills in kindergarten with Spanish words for basic greeting, colors, numbers, classroom objects, etc. They even use Spanish in music class. As they progress through the grades Spanish encompasses the geography of our Mexican neighbors, the creation of an imaginary Spanish town, emails to

exchange students, plans for a trip to a Spanish speaking country and even BRS Broadcast News in Spanish. Technology helps along the way: SMARTboards and iPads for starters.

The success of the Spanish program is evaluated by a sixth grade exit exam. This monitors and evaluates the progress of the students and helps access their readiness for learning languages at higher levels. ~



THE GARDEN



ARTSWEEK 11
Beecher Road School
2018

exposed to many artists from the invention of the camera to our present day. Spring gardens planted outside each classroom will be a lasting reminder of this celebration of the arts for years to come. ~



The visual arts aspect of ARTS-WEEK 11 focused on the artist’s interpretations of The Garden. Children were





Multi Age Group (MAG) students raise money while learning life skills

Numbered nest boxes have been erected on the BRS campus as part of a bluebird nestbox trail created and maintained by the Multi-Age Group (MAG). This trail was built in an effort to help reintegrate bluebirds into what should be a primary environment for them, were it not for the invasive English sparrow.

There are several concepts and skills embedded in this year-long thematic



study. It is propelled by issues which are key to the present and future lives of children. These include native and invasive species, habitat change and environmental activism. The project includes four mixed-age workshops which are attended by all of the students over the course of a six week block. The workshops were titled: *Nests and Nest Boxes*, *Changing Habitat*, *Dynamics of Eco-systems* and *Bird Anatomy*.

This year the project took an interesting turn. The group decided they wanted to help the struggling people of Puerto Rico in the wake of Hurricane Maria. Thus arose the idea of a fundraiser. The students built 51 nest boxes on an assembly line. The fundraiser also included the design and

making of over 20 hand sewn and stuffed bluebird ornaments.



51 bluebird nest boxes built



3 Rules for Genius Hour

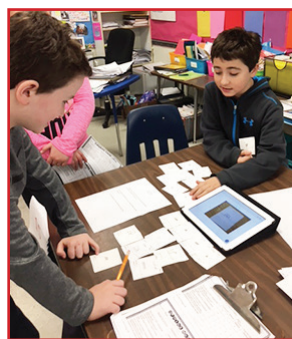
1. You have to **research** something.
2. You have to **create** something.
3. You have to **present** something.

During this school year, the fifth grade team worked together to develop a project called *Genius Hour*. This project-based learning initiative gave students the opportunity to become experts on a topic that they are interested in, and then teach others about it. The flexibility of choice kept students engaged in their learning and provided self-motivation.

The process involved developing a complex question, researching it in the library, on-line and with the human resources here at Beecher and others outside of school.

Following this phase, the students develop a mode of presentation for their findings for their class and the other fifth grade classes.

The concept of Genius Hour is based on a business practice used by Google, Inc. ~



The boy at the left created an electronic iPad presentation to share with classmates.



The girl at the left chose to create a traditional visual presentation to accompany her new-found expertise on dog behavior.

"Capstone Project" ponders the question and digs to find out

Grade six students spent the year in a project-based learning initiative studying heroes and their impact on the world. They began the year discussing the heroism displayed on September 11, 2001 by first responders and everyday citizens, including the sailors and boaters who helped to evacuate lower Manhattan.



Students interviewed and wrote reflection pieces for Veterans Day, highlighting the heroes who are still among us.

Throughout a study of fiction and nonfiction, students tabulated traits, actions, decisions and relationships that defined a hero through literature and history. This work included how each character has flaws. Various characteristics of six hero types emerged, for which students considered real world and literary examples. Students spent time in Readers and Writers Workshops in April and May independently applying these concepts to a final task:

1. To analyze a piece of literature and the heroic qualities that emerge through a character;
2. To evaluate a real world example of a person, past or present, who displays similar traits and to reflect on that person's impact on the world;
3. To present findings in a display and presentation. ~



Sixth grade student presents her findings about heroism to other students.



Enrichment Clusters capitalize on students' multiple intelligences



Harvard's Dr. Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences

Groups of third grade students who share common interests come together during *Enrichment Clusters*, specially designed time blocks, to pursue their interests. This activity embodies the concept of multiple intelligences.

Different activity clusters address each of these. Some of the interest clusters include:

- *Musical – rhythmic*: Songs and Music
- *Visual – spatial*: Sea Shell Decor, Arts Alive
- *Verbal – linguistic*: Comic Book Creators, Readers' Theater
- *Logical – mathematical*: Energetic Engineers, Geometric Art, Cooking
- *Bodily – kinesthetic*: Taekwondo Toughies, Dance Party
- *Interpersonal*: Board Games, Bracelet Making



Energetic Engineers (above), Comic Book Creators (below)



Field Day



At BRS the physical education and health program focuses on comprehensive life-long wellness. The physical fitness assessment for the state of Connecticut is the goal and all of the lessons aim to enhance students' success rate in fitness areas. They include:

- cardiorespiratory endurance
- muscular strength
- endurance and flexibility

This year the team went to an American Red Cross Training for CPR and choking. Students in grade 6 were taught how to handle a choking emergency. The steps to clear an airway were modeled and then performed by each child. In addition the students were taught how to handle a cardiac arrest emergency. They were instructed on hands only CPR performed on manikins. As a culminating activity all students were required to perform CPR for two consecutive minutes.



Yes, sixth graders learning CPR and being tested on real CPR dummies.



BRS has the only elementary school learn to swim/aquatic safety program in Connecticut.

Various events throughout the year support the BRS physical education and health goals. BRS participated in a school wide jump rope for heart program sponsored by the American Heart Association. Students were exposed to a variety of jump rope skills and emphasis was put on how jump rope and cardiovascular activities can improve your heart. At BRS the swimming program is the only elementary program in Connecticut to teach students about aquatic safety, how to swim, stroke development and aquatic fitness.

The BRS state of the art fitness room allows students at a very young age to be introduced to a variety of fitness training activities. 5th and 6th grade students have a goal and maintain a fitness log over a 12-week period. The knowledge acquired and independent thinking enhances their lifelong health and fitness. In addition, our sixth grade students assisted teachers and staff in running the events for our Field Day. They also met Bethany sixth graders in a joint field day as a transition activity for their move to middle school.



Each year BRS has a few days that are posted as “no school for students.” Teachers are, however, hard at work in professional development

learning sessions in subject-specific activities, research, demonstrations, updates and



other methods of enhancing their skills.

Samples of topics in all-day sessions this past March included Kindergarten Orientation, Music PLC Collaboration, Text Bands, New Generation Science Standards (NGSS), Google Forms, Power School (software) and Privacy, Technology Infrastructure Review, and more.

Expected outcomes for the day were clear and teachers came away with honed strengths and information that they apply to their classrooms. ~



The 18-week D.A.R.E Keepin' It Real program teaches sixth graders about the dangers of drugs, decision making skills, dealing with peer pressure and

risks and consequences. Bullying, internet safety, dealing with stress and many other topics that students may encounter while in middle and high School are also covered. ~



beyond the classroom

Yearbook



yearbook pages based on the outcome of the survey. In addition, each class received a packet of miscellaneous questions and each student received their own question to answer either anonymously or by name which was later published in the yearbook.

The group worked cohesively and in the end they produced a fantastic recap of their last year at Beecher Road School. ~

Right - Members of the proud Class of 2018 Yearbook Committee gather after their major undertaking was complete.

Twelve BRS sixth grade students formed the committee. They met after school once a week for 16 weeks in the Technology Center. Their goal was to create a chronicle highlighting the 2017-2018 grade 6 school year. This included field trips, special days and school events. The yearbook crew collaborated with each other to generate a student survey and then created



BRS students are reminded each year of the meaning of Veterans Day through a school wide assembly at which several veteran guests are honored. With a welcome from Student Council escorts and rousing fanfare from the school's band and chorus, local vets who have served in the US Military were recognized. ~



One outgrowth of our Strategic Development Plan was the establishment of a District Diversity Committee comprised of parents, staff, administration and Board members. It works to ensure that we are inclusive in all programs and practices. ~





Connecticut holds us accountable for student progress and achievement



CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Gina Prisco, Principal, and Assistant Principal Analisa Sherman, summarized the state's *Next Generation Student Accountability*

Report for 2016-2017 at the March Board of Education meeting. The report includes data from *Smarter Balanced Assessments* for grades 3-6, an indicator that looks at multiple factors. Those indicators include:

- Academic achievement and growth
- Participation rate on the assessments
- Chronic absenteeism
- State mandated physical fitness tests

The Woodbridge School District results mirrored the state, with some areas showing growth, and some areas remaining at current levels. We saw improvements in lowering the percentage of chronically absent students – defined as students missing 10% or more school days for any reason.

We also showed an increase in participation rate across all tested areas and across all subgroups from 2015-16 to 2016-17. Subgroups are defined by race, ethnicity, income levels, English Language Learners and others. While our participation rate is growing, because of parent "opt-outs," it is still below the 95% state requirement in several tested areas.

Schools are ranked into five descending categories by state law. For the 2015-16 school year, we were ranked as a category 2 school, and since our participation rate remained below 95% for the 2016-17 school year we remain a category 2 school.

Next steps include analyzing achievement to inform instruction, improve student outcomes and continue strategies to increase participation and address chronic absenteeism. Future plans also include:

- Share reports with faculty and larger community
- Continue to use state and national resources to increase participation rate
- Data review to determine implications for instructional change in Physical Education
- Continued monitoring and communication to address absenteeism
- Examine systems that support high needs students and those receiving intervention
- Continue Strategic Plan Initiatives that support all students

Your worst winter nightmare – calmed by lots of caring people

During the holiday recess in December, and after nearly a week-long stretch of temperatures in the single digits, one of our heating units froze and burst on Dec. 30. That weekend an energy recovery unit malfunctioned and began introducing frigid outside air into the system. The continuous cold airflow caused the heating coil to freeze and eventually burst causing considerable flooding in several classroom areas.



Upon receiving word of the mishap, our custodial staff, and ServPro, leapt into action to start the difficult cleanup process. Town officials and BRS administrators and teachers added their aid to the effort with the goal of having little impact on instruction when school reopened on Jan. 2.

Extensive cleanup and restoration took place that included water cleanup, dehumidifiers, air scrubbers, and restoration work. Prior to the final release of rooms, each received a top-to-bottom cleaning, and inspections by the Building Inspector, Fire Marshall, and Health Inspector.



Teachers work to get the school ready after the flood and ice



Our students, staff and parents displayed outstanding flexibility and patience during the period of restoration. We are also grateful for the tremendous support given to us by First Selectman Heller, Finance Director Genovese, as well as the time and expertise provided by Town Public Works supervisor Brad Parsons, Fire Marshall Capucci, Fire Chief Rowland and Building inspector Gilbertson.



needs based on budgetary considerations.

To date they have over a dozen accomplishments, from painting the office window frames and new mats for South Gym to overseeing the allocation of student art throughout the building. The scope of their work includes aesthetics and safety.

Pincipal Gina Prisco and a committee of twelve, made up of staff and one Board of Education member, constitute the BRS Beautification Committee. After a comprehensive tour of the building, with Student Council members, the committee meets on a monthly basis. They compile suggestions based on their observations and prioritize

3 AWARDS for BRS



Principal Gina Prisco receives "Going Green" award from the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education for her electronic Principal's Newsletter. Presenting for CABE is Bob Guthrie.



BRS Student Council and advisors were honored with an Outstanding Volunteer award by the Town of Woodbridge for their work with Woodbridge seniors throughout the year as part of the Town's Intergenerational Partnership program.



Recipients of the South Central Area Superintendent's Association Student Award are (front row) Gregory Hofstatter and Melissa Sofuoglu. Awards are earned for Community service and service to others, academic prowess and leadership to the school community.



Mrs. Elizabeth “Liz” Heagney is the 2019 Woodbridge Teacher of the Year for the upcoming 2018-19 school year. This honor was announced to the entire faculty and staff at the Year End Celebration Breakfast held on June 13 in the BRS Media Center.

Liz has taught fifth grade at Beecher for the past five years and was a teacher in the Westport and Southbury school districts prior to her work in Woodbridge. Liz has served as the fifth grade

Team Leader and has been a leader in the school, serving as a member of the Professional Development Committee as well as serving as a Student Council advisor.

Mrs. Heagney holds a Masters Degree from Sacred Heart University and recently completed advanced coursework in Reading as part of the Connecticut Literacy Program.

Congratulations Liz! ~

With composting and more recycling, we might see a 50% reduction in waste.

It's no secret that Americans throw out a lot of food and trash. That fact was brought to light in a unique event created by the Woodbridge Ad Hoc Town Sustainability Committee in conjunction with Beecher staff.

Just how much is thrown out, and what happens to it? To get to the bottom of these questions, two days in the school cafeteria provided some insights. Members of the Sustainability Committee came to BRS to help students understand how much food waste we create and how we can recycle more items. The findings were eye-opening. ~



At the end of both days we weighed the waste

DAY 1

Food Scraps Recyclables Trash



Total Cafeteria Waste: 144 lbs

- Trash: 68 lbs (47.2%)
- Recyclables: 28 lbs (19.4%)
- Food Scraps: 48 lbs (33.3%)



DAY 2

Food Scraps Recyclables Trash



Total Cafeteria Waste: 210 lbs

- Trash: 45 lbs (21.4%)
- Recyclables: 60 lbs (28.5%)
- Food Scraps: 105 lbs (50%)

We work with the whole child

An array of strategies that touch everyone at BRS are used to support the social emotional development of students. Faculty are involved in bolstering a school-wide focus on *Responsive Classroom*, staff training, coaching of staff, professional development and the help of a Responsive Classroom consultant throughout the year. Student involvement includes whole school initiatives like *Bkind Week* with activities throughout the week focusing on kindness and caring. Field Day has been revived at BRS. The PE and Health department organized a school wide day of activities, each led by a group of sixth grade students. Lunch groups hosted by school psychologists and a social worker, including positive peer models, support students struggling with social skills. Finally, *purposeful play*, as a social and academic skills development strategy, is offered to primary aged students.

All these, and more, lead to a positive school climate that benefits all. ~



The BRS staff has organized the *Social Action Committee*. Its purpose is to raise money and collect items to meet two goals: First, to provide a service that meets specific needs of students and families in the BRS community. For instance:

- provide activity fees for extra curricular activities
- provide needed clothing; donate food certificates and other family support.

Secondly, each year to be involved in at least one outreach program that benefits people in the greater Woodbridge area:

- This year the BRS faculty and staff donated \$200 in gift cards and 60 bags of groceries to families to support the *Thanksgiving Food Drive*. Two families were selected to receive gift cards and other donations.

The families were chosen with the cooperation of Woodbridge Human Services that distributed the donations made by the BRS Social Action Committee. ~

Student Council awarded for service and commitment

Woodbridge Senior Center Outstanding Volunteer Award went to the BRS Student Council. From sending Valentines Day cards to Hamden Health Care residents to visiting the Woodbridge Center for an Inter-generational Event with Senior Citizens, the BRS Student Council has been busy promoting good will, as well as raising money for various charities and organizations. These students and their advisors are committed to service and community.

One such organization is *K9 First Responders, Inc.*, centered in nearby Milford. It is a critical incident mental health support (CIMHS) organization. K9FR teams bridge the gap between a traumatic event and the connection to mental health supports. A compassionate presence leveraging the human-canine bond help restore a person's emotional and cognitive equilibrium. K9FR teams are trained in psychosocial supports assisting victims of disaster, catastrophe, crisis or violence. We serve communities and individuals as well as police, fire, EMS and other public safety personnel. Our interactions foster individual and community resilience. 🐾



Hi, I'm Pooky, a trained K-9 First Responder. Thank you for helping me help people who need it most.



Town of Woodbridge
Woodbridge School District
40 Beecher Road
Woodbridge, CT 06525

PRSRT STD
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
EDDM RETAIL

LOCAL
POSTAL CUSTOMER
WOODBIDGE, CT 06525

Flu prevention measures pay off

In the fall of 2017, a flu clinic for faculty and staff was held to encourage parents to vaccinate their children against the virus. Pre-K students are mandated to get the flu vaccine to remain at BRS. The clinic emphasized good flu prevention practices, vaccine promotion, health curriculum support as well as custodial cleaning support. BRS had a low incidence of influenza infections despite the fact that there was a high state and national incidence. 🐾

THE BRIDGE

... for 12 years, connecting school and community by informing Woodbridge residents about the work of their school district and its student and staff accomplishments.



Taxpayer's Guide to the 2018-2019 Woodbridge Board of Education Budget

The Woodbridge Board of Education, Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance approved the funding plan for the school district effective July 1, 2018. The budget increase is 2.29% over the previous year. This budget is respectful of the taxpayer while continuing to move the educational system forward.

This operating budget is the legal plan under which the school system is funded. It puts in place the financial wherewithal to pay for one year's worth of education.



Budget Category	Last Year 2017-18	This Year 2018-19	\$ Amount Change	% Change*	% of Total Budget*
Salaries and Benefits ¹	\$ 11,118,443	\$ 11,381,329	\$ 262,886	2.36%	77.57%
Utilities and Heat ²	275,098	244,432	(30,666)	-11.15%	1.67%
Student Transportation ³	683,161	671,259	(11,902)	-1.74%	4.58%
Tuition - (out of district) ⁴	618,744	631,959	13,215	2.14%	4.31%
All Outside Services ⁵	1,237,559	1,268,809	31,250	2.53%	8.65%
General Supplies ⁶	305,860	299,482	(6,378)	-2.09%	2.04%
Furniture and Equipment ⁷	32,082	97,400	65,318	203.60%	0.66%
Dues and Fees ⁸	72,556	77,615	5,059	6.97%	0.53%
TOTALS	\$ 14,343,503	\$ 14,672,285	\$ 328,782	2.29%	100%

* Percents rounded to the nearest one-hundredth of a percent
1: Salaries and benefits include savings from early retirement incentives, in addition to 1.5FTE new positions in response to increasing enrollment.

2: Electricity, water, sewer and heating

3: In addition to regular school buses, some children require special transportation due to special needs (\$257,874). We also buy the diesel fuel for the buses through the purchasing consortium at a cost of \$29,280.

4: Because some children, due to special needs, require school settings outside of Woodbridge, we pay tuition (\$631,959) for their special education.

5: Services we purchase or lease. Examples include telephones, insurance, Internet, postage, professional development, legal, technical/professional services, substitutes, school resource officer, building repairs, improvements and maintenance

6: Paper, pencils, books, wax, soap, paper products, band aids, software, envelopes, library books, subscriptions, etc.

7: In most cases, furniture and equipment items purchased are replacements.

8: *Ezra Academy* school nurse (required by state law), unemployment, memberships in professional associations, miscellaneous expenditures, other fees, etc.

Note: For a more complete and detailed look at the operating budget, go to the district website and click on 2018-2019 budget.

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THE BRIDGE

The Education Report of the
Woodbridge School District
No. 12,
Summer 2018

Woodbridge Board of Education 2017-18

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Paul Testa – John Vultee
Robert Gilbert – Supt. of Schools

The Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools gratefully acknowledge the dozens of staff members who made contributions to *The Bridge*, and to all the staff who make programs and children's minds come alive every day. Thank you.

The Woodbridge Board of Education does not knowingly condone discrimination in employment, assignment, program or service, on the basis of race, gender, color, religion, natural origin, age, sexual orientation, disability or unrelated abilities to perform the duties of the position.