



MR. GILBERT'S PARENT UPDATE



Superintendent of Schools Woodbridge School District

MISSION

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.

woodbridge.k12.ct.us

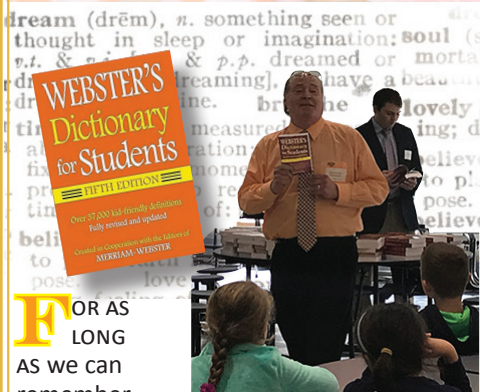
May 3, 2019

Dear Beecher Road School Families:

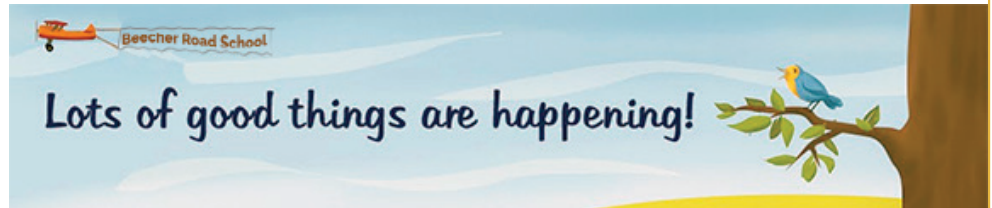
Beecher Road School is a professional learning community that strives to maximize the learning and success of each child as we prepare them for the future. This edition of the "Parent Update" highlights how we use technology to prepare our students. The update also notes the importance of continuous professional learning for teachers.

Please enjoy other portions of this update as we call attention to the important contributions of our parents (PTO) and Woodbridge residents/clubs (Rotary) as well as the recognitions, awards and activities taking place.

Hold on to your hats - the final weeks of the 2018-19 school year are here! As always, thank you for your support and partnership.



FOR AS LONG AS we can remember, each spring the Woodbridge Rotary Club has presented every BRS third grader with their own personal dictionary. Thank you. Rotarian Tony Anastassio said: "As always, it is a pleasure for the Woodbridge Rotary Club to be able to provide the third grade students with dictionaries and to have the opportunity to say a few words. We are also excited to once again provide the funds for the D.A.R.E graduation program and look forward to seeing you all again in a few weeks for the ceremony."



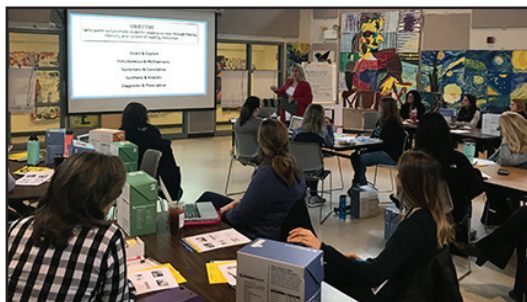
WHAT'S YOURS? CAPSTONE PROJECT



BEFORE 6TH GRADE STUDENTS "graduate" from Beecher they are required to complete a capstone project. Think of it as a synthesis

of skills learned since kindergarten that of course includes reading, writing and thinking, but also integrating technical multimodal presentation skills, critical Internet research and team cooperation. These capstone projects are shared with other BRS students, teachers and parents at a Capstone Project Fair as shown here in April.

Teacher PD



REMEMBER THAT DAY in March when your children were off from school but the teachers were working? At left, teachers were having their skills updated in professional development workshops. Why? At BRS, we are a professional learning community that values adult learning to impact student learning.

BRS IS UNIQUE AMONG CONNECTICUT ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS: it has its own swimming pool. Lifesaving skills are taught as part the physical education curriculum. Here, 5th and 6th graders participate in the annual Swim For Heart fundraising event.





Our Technology Plan

FOR THE LAST THIRTY YEARS the Woodbridge School District has created a *Technology Plan* that drives both technology instruction and the use and maintenance of the current technology hardware in the district. The existing technology plan, coming to a close this year, sought to promote personal learning, creativity and innovation among all members of the BRS community. The District has supported the needs of the faculty and staff to encourage and nurture students to become independent lifelong learners.

The adoption of the *Student Data Privacy Act, PA 16-189*, has changed the landscape for how technology is used and integrated in Connecticut classrooms. Therefore, the proposed district technology plan is centered around creating a *trusted learning environment* that implements high standards for student data privacy protections around five core practice areas: *leadership, business, data security, professional development and classroom*. The District, as a trusted steward of both student and staff digital information, is consistently reviewing policies, procedures and practices to ensure the safety and security of all.

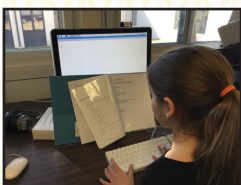
The technology team, along with other staff members, is currently working on the draft of the plan which will be finalized in the coming months for the start of the 2019-20 school year.

Open Tech Lab

LAST YEAR THE TECHNOLOGY CENTER began open Tech Lab for students in grades 5 and 6. Students are able to sign up with their classroom teachers based on their daily classroom schedules. Opportunities for students include animation, robotics, coding (Scratch and Python) and a demo day to try out new and emerging software and hardware that is being tested for possible future use in technology classes.

Coding for All

AT BRS WE OFFER STUDENTS a variety of coding experiences throughout the grades, and many of those experiences don't even involve a computer. Giving students experiences both with hands-on coding using robotics such as Code-a-Pillar, Bee-Bots and Cubelets, combined



learning to code

with computer based programs (Kodable, Scratch and Python) allows them to learn and explore multiple ways to interact with technology. These experiences plant a seed for future learning and exploration. Students can

find the areas and programming styles that interest them and delve deeper into them as they grow.

Traveling the World ...

STUDENTS IN GRADES 3 and 5 have recently gone on *Google Expeditions* to explore different parts of the world as part of their science classes and enrichment clusters. The technology team, in conjunction with classroom teachers and our STEAM teacher, has used our new Google expedition virtual reality goggles to transport students across the globe. These experiences have enabled students to see the areas they are studying and get an up-close look at different parts of the world to better understand the concepts being taught.

Grade 2 Google

FOR THE FIRST TIME, the second grade team will be adding iPads and *Google Classroom* for their unit on local government and community helpers. Over the course of two weeks, students will ask questions to drive their own learning, and decide on a way to present their new-found knowledge to their classmates. This project further integrates technology into the curriculum.

Digital Citizenship

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP IS BECOMING an increasingly important piece of our students' lives. We begin teaching digital citizenship in Kindergarten through a variety of lessons. Digital citizenship skills are also taught outside the technology center as well as through health and the D.A.R.E. program. We believe it takes the entire community to create a responsible digital citizen, and we continually strive to supply the background knowledge for our students to build on.

WBRS

SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS ARE GIVEN a unique opportunity to become a member of a working news broadcast crew. In September students may apply by completing an application that includes an essay on their interest in the program and why they feel they would be an asset to the team.



Throughout the year students are introduced to the technical aspects of creating a broadcast, as well as researching information for segments, interviewing peers and faculty and developing presenting skills.

Calendar Dates

MAY: May 7-17 SBAC Testing
 May 17 DARE Graduation (Grade 6 Only)
 May 17 - Quassy Night w/BCS
 May 20-24 SBAC Make-Up
 May 20 Town Budget Hearing
 May 21 WBOE Meeting
 May 22 - BRS Spring Concert
 May 20-24 **Artsweek**, Family Night May 23
 May 27 - Memorial Day No school
JUNE: June 13 - 1:10 Dismissal - LAST DAY
 June 12 Gr. 6 Graduation at the high school
 June 17 WBOE Meeting



Assistant Principal Sherman and BOE Chair Hamilton accept the awards from CBE Director George Kurtyka.

* Connecticut Association of Boards of Education

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK and BRS Calendar win statewide communications awards in the annual competition sponsored by CBE*.



Our PTO is Truly Amazing



water bottle filler

THE BRS PTO GIFTED a new climbing wall for the south Gym and a new water bottle filling station – two examples of how the PTO enhances our school. The PTO also provides thousands of dollars to bring special speakers, and curricular and cultural programs to enhance learning for all our students.

Our Amazing Student Council

BECAUSE OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE to the school and community the *BRS Student Council* was recognized at the April BOE meeting. Principal Prisco (rt) and Teacher/Advisor Teresa Nakozi join the students.



Social Action Committee Recognized

BRS TEACHER DEBBIE SOKOL was recognized at the annual *Woodbridge Center Volunteer Appreciation Tea* for her work as chair of the school's *Social Action Committee* that provides families in need with gift cards and gift baskets.

