



MR. GILBERT'S

PARENT UPDATE



Superintendent of Schools Woodbridge School District

woodbridge.k12.ct.us

August 28, 2019

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.

Dear Beecher Road School Families

AS ALWAYS, WE HOPE that you and your family had a safe and fun-filled summer.

As we open our doors to a new school year, please join me in greeting all our students, including our new kindergartners, and families. Our Beecher Road School family extends a warm welcome to you.

Just as your family was busy over the summer, Beecher was also fully engaged in providing students with summer experiences and programs: Summer Enrichment Program, Summer Scholars and Special Education, Extended Day and, of course, Recreation.

We are excited the first day of school has arrived and look forward to a wealth of learning and growth.

On behalf of the Beecher Road School faculty and staff, have a great school year!

Robert F. "Bob" Gilbert
Superintendent

Calendar Dates

- AUG 28:
First day of school
- AUG 29:
Ice-Cream Social - 5:30-7:30
- SEPT 2:
No School - Labor Day

OPEN HOUSE DATES 6:30 in BRS Cafe

- SEPT 5:
Grades K, 1 & 2
- SEPT 9:
Grades 3, 4 / MAG
- SEPT 11:
Grades PK, 5 & 6

- SEPT 30:
No School - Rosh Hashanah

Ms. Prisco leaves Beecher for a new position – Ms. Sherman appointed principal for 2019-20

AFTER SEVEN YEARS of dedicated leadership and service to the students and families as the Principal of BRS, Gina Prisco accepted the position of Principal of Frenchtown Elementary School in Trumbull effective August 5.

The change provides Ms. Prisco with the opportunity to return to a larger school district that shares similar instructional philosophies with Woodbridge.

While not an easy decision for Gina, we congratulate her on this appointment and thank her for her exceptional leadership and dedicated service to Woodbridge and Beecher Road School.

The Board of Education knows the importance of addressing leadership for the upcoming year as well as for the long term. They believe a well-planned and thorough search for a new principal is in the best interest of our community and attempting to do that by the first day of school was not feasible. Our goal is to ensure that all members of our community, teachers, staff and parents have an opportunity to engage in the search process. Given this overarching thought process, here are the actions taken by the Board last month:



- To receive the resignation of Principal Gina Prisco with deep regret.
- To appoint Assistant Principal Analisa Sherman (left above) as Principal, and BRS Teacher Doreen Merrill (right) as assistant principal for the 2019-20 school year.
- To authorize the Superintendent to begin the planning of a principal search process.

The Board appreciates the experience, enthusiasm and continuity that Ms. Sherman and Ms. Merrill bring to Beecher as the leadership team.

Ms. Sherman has been Assistant Principal of BRS since July 2015. Prior to Beecher, she was an instructional coach and elementary classroom teacher in Fairfield. Ms. Merrill is a veteran teacher and leader at BRS and has over 35 years of teaching experience in Connecticut schools.

Welcome Our New Teachers



Taylor Da Silva

Taylor joins BRS from Stamford and Derby Public Schools as a reading teacher as well as an English as a second language teacher working with English language learners.



Robin Gerber

Robin returns to the BRS MAG program after working at Naugatuck Valley Community College since her departure from BRS in 2005. Robin will be teaching the MAG Grade 2 students.



Jennifer Naylor

Jennifer joins BRS from Brookfield and Bridgeport Public Schools, where she served as a Special Education Resource teacher. Jennifer will be working with students in the primary grades.



Robin Querker

Robin, previously with the Bethany and Milford school districts, will be working as a Special Education Resource teacher in grades 2 and 3.



Christina Renzoni

Christina, formerly with Guilford Public Schools, will service BRS students in the intermediate grades as a speech and language pathologist.

New Appointments

While not new to BRS, we also welcome James Mase, Danielle Prindle and Lacey Prindle to teacher assistant positions.



LAST SPRING'S RESULTS of the *Annual Panorama Survey* for students, staff and parents were presented to

the Board of Education in July. The survey is administered to have an additional measure for purposes of continuous improvement.

They show the strongest responses were from students, while parent responses dipped a little but still remain high. Teacher and staff responses were the weakest.

Strategies are being employed in the areas of climate, staff collaboration and student behavior.

Thank you all for participating in the survey.

For a complete look at what the school community has to say, go to the school district's website > District Information > Superintendent's Communications> (scroll to the bottom of page) "Parent Survey Results 2019."



**Instagram
BRS Owls**

BEECHER ROAD SCHOOL is now on Instagram! Instagram will allow BRS administrators to share special events, celebrate student accomplishments, highlight student work and give you a peek into day-to-day happenings.

You can find us at BRS Owls. This is a private account, so you must request access to follow it. Once you go to [instagram.com/brsowls](https://www.instagram.com/brsowls) and request to follow BRS Owls, you also need to send an email to instagram@woodbridgeps.org and include your name, your Instagram name, the name(s) of your child(ren) and their grade levels. Final approval won't be given to follow the Instagram account until that email has been received. Beecher Road School reserves the right to deny access to any party for the protection of students. We look forward to seeing you on Instagram!

We extend our best wishes to our recent retirees Rich Burness (33 yrs), Roberta Anderson (32 years), Gaye Mastrianna (27 years), Kathy Holowienko (24.5 years) Debra Sokol (24 years) and Joanne Giaquinto (22 years).



Program teachers: Ms. Nakouzi Ms. Rizzo and Ms. Fanelli.

Summer Scholars 2019

BECOMING BETTER READERS, writers and thinkers is a fun task when the right combination of teaching, learning, interest and laughter team up around a theme children are excited by: space. Part of this year's *Summer Scholars* program included a visit from 6th Grade Teacher Nancy Smerekanicz who spent a week in NASA Lab Instruction focused on science, space exploration and leadership. Her visit helped ignite the students' passion for all things space. The program helped students and parents apply concrete ideas to better reading and writing. For instance:

What stops the Summer Slide?

- ~Go to the Woodbridge Town Library
- ~Read a few pages or a whole book
- ~Notice how words are spelled
- ~Get hooked on a series book
- ~Cook and measure with a parent
- ~Play board games.



Ms. Smerekanicz visits in her NASA jumpsuit.

Summer Chefs



Our popular Summer Enrichment Program Restaurant Week attracts student chefs who create menus, dishes and table decor, serving food from France to Asia. Adults are happy to sample!

Meet Your New Board of Education

With town wide elections held in May, the Woodbridge Board of Education is now:

- Dr. Steven Fleischman – Chair
- Lynn Piasczyk – Vice-Chair
- Maegan Genovese – Secretary
- Dan Cowan
- Jeffrey Hughes
- Dr. David Ross
- Joyce Shavers
- Dr. Michael Strambler
- Dr. Jeffrey Townsend

District has established a "Green Team"

THE RECENT WORK OF THE BOARD of Education's *Ad Hoc Sustainability Committee* has concluded with the establishment of a "Green Team," and a partnership/membership with the Connecticut Green LEAF program. Our goal this year will be to educate our students about food waste and recycling, and create new routines in our cafeteria to support this effort. More information will be shared as time goes on. Contact MAG teachers Ms. Ahern or Ms. Hart-Rooney for more information.



Website redesign coming your way

OUR WEBSITE IS CURRENTLY going through a redesign process with the goal of launching the new version sometime this fall. We are interested in parent perspectives on how we can increase the effectiveness of information on our website, so please respond to the entry in Ms. Sherman's first day Principal *eNewsletter* to provide your thoughts and suggestions.

Facilities Update

AS YOU WALK AROUND the halls of Beecher you will continue to see the face lift that has taken place over the past few years. The painting of our large meeting spaces (South Gym and South Assembly) as well as the accent colors and stripes in halls and on doorways are just a few signs of this exciting process.

We have also had some significant work completed (Phase 1) to improve our HVAC system, all with the goals of improved comfort, reduced humidity and maximized economies. Phase 2 work is anticipated to take place soon.