



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

February 5, 2020

Greetings Beecher Road School Families,

I HOPE THAT THIS UPDATE FINDS YOU HEALTHY and enjoying a milder than normal winter (knock on wood!) .

In this Parent Update you will enjoy reading about a summary of our outstanding student state assessment data, a school safety update, opportunities for parents to serve on committees, student and staff activities as well as a budget update below.

BUDGET: This is the "budget time of the year" and with that said I would like to provide you with an overview of my Superintendent's FY21 Budget Proposal that was approved in December by the Woodbridge Board of Education and recently presented to the Boards of Selectmen and Finance for their consideration. This proposed budget represents a net increase of \$115,569 (0.76%) over the current year. The key drivers behind the budget include (1) responsiveness to town financial needs, (2) salary and benefit increases, (3) increasing student needs, (4) building Special Education program capacity, (5) collaborative and ongoing efforts in cost efficiencies as well as, (6) supporting the strategic plan initiatives that are key to our continuous development. This budget maintains all current staffing levels and programs and adds 2.0 FTE positions for mandated special services support.

The FY21 spending plan not only continues to support the academic, emotional, social and physical needs of our students in order to prepare them for a successful future as responsible global citizens, but it responds to the fiscal needs of our supportive town. Thank you for your partnership in support of your successful children.

Beecher students' continuous improvement puts them among the top in Connecticut

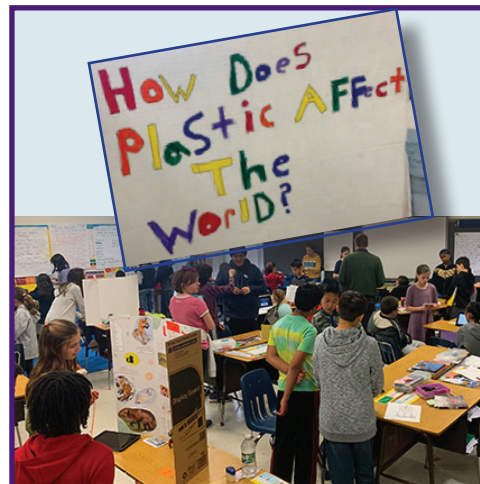
Takeaways STAND OUT AS A RESULT OF state testing:

1. The percentage of BRS students meeting and exceeding goal (level 3 and 4) in English Language Arts (ELA), Math and Science over the past 5 years continues to increase.
2. The percentage of BRS students exceeding goal, reaching the highest tier of achievement (level 4), in Math and ELA over the past five years continues to climb.
3. District science scores rank #1 in our District Reference Group (DRG – districts similar to Woodbridge), and #4 in the state.
4. Of the state's 206 school districts, charter and magnet schools, BRS ranks # 20 and #21 respectively in ELA and Math.
5. BRS ranks #5 in the state for growth in math and ELA.



WELCOME TO BEECHER! A beautiful new graphic, created by Art Teacher Linda Acheson, was unveiled yesterday at the north entrance that welcomes all to BRS and underscores what the school is all about.

Robert F. Gilbert, Superintendent of Schools – Woodbridge School District – 40 Beecher Road – Woodbridge, Connecticut 06525 – 203-387-6631



Wanna' know something? Ask a Genius. Fifth graders delve into topics of their choice that they research deeply and communicate their learning in unique ways. Others come to learn from the "genius" through presentations, exhibits and asking questions.



BRS PTO Executive Board for all you do for us and our students!
and
BRS families for supporting the PTO Fun-Run fundraiser!



Kindness is a trait we develop in our students. The Kindness Tree (above) has leaves that show it. The boys below are making blankets for children in hospitals as part of Project Linus.



School Safety Update

WITH OUR RECENT AND SUCCESSFUL LOCKDOWN drill, our on-going highest priority is the safety of the students and staff at BRS. Highlights include: An active *Safety and Security Committee*, employment of a *school resource officer (SRO)*, *security check* at our main entrance, whole school door locking system, and regular and active practice of a variety of drills in order to prepare for actual emergencies. In addition, we have a longstanding collaborative relationship with the Woodbridge Police Department.

BRS employs a full time SRO through a *memorandum of understanding* with the Police Department. The SRO is paid as part of our district budget. The role of the SRO in our school is to help create a safe, secure, non-threatening and orderly learning environment for students, teachers and staff. The SRO also models and promotes a positive image for law enforcement. Our SRO makes classroom presentations when requested by the school administration on various topics.

The SRO also provides all lessons in the 6th grade D.A.R.E. program including alcohol and drug awareness and serves as a resource to the school administration. The topic of School Security Personnel/SRO was reviewed by the Board of Education in the fall of 2017 and will likely be reviewed by the Board of Education in the coming year. We would like to thank all families for their support of our ongoing efforts in the area of school safety.



TEACHERS HONE THEIR SKILLS in teaching math using the Math Workshop method. Here Kristina Conroy shares strategies with colleagues.

REMINDER DATES

- Feb. 14: Early Dismissal - 1:10
- Feb. 17-18: President's Day /Winter Break
- Feb. 24: Board of Education Meeting
- March 20: No School Professional Development Day for teachers

We Need Your Help. Volunteer for the Ad Hoc Safety Committee, or the Strategic Plan Update Committee

THE CHARGE OF THE **SAFETY COMMITTEE** is to make a report to the Board of Education regarding the staff and program resources necessary to address the changing and significant student behavioral needs at BRS. We are seeking two parents to serve on this committee.

THE **STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE** will review priorities and revise our existing three-year strategic plan. We are seeking a few parents to serve on this committee.

If interested, please email Marsha DeGennaro: mdegennaro@woodbridgeps.org no later than Friday, Feb. 14 at 9 AM. If there are more than two interested parents for the Safety Committee, or more than a few interested parents for the Strategic Plan Update Committee, a blind lottery will be take place on Feb. 14.

Principal Search Committee

THE PRINCIPAL SEARCH COMMITTEE, made up of various stakeholders, continues their work under the direction of CABC Search Consultant Mary Broderick. Interviews will be arranged and held soon with the plan of bring a recommendation to the Board of Education in March.

Annual Survey Around the Corner

OUR ANNUAL SURVEY WILL BE MOVED UP to March this year. We hope to add questions about our school calendar and questions regarding our upcoming Strategic Plan Revision Process. More information will be coming to parents via the Swift K12 Notification system.



THE WINNING GINGERBREAD HOUSE!
BRS students and students from the Amity HS Leo's Club (Jr. Lions) held the 1st annual Gingerbread House Competition. During this after school activity in January, Amity High School students worked with our students to create fanciful gingerbread houses while providing a leadership opportunity for Amity Leo's.



BRS IS AWARDED STEM Talent Pipeline Grant.
State Rep. Themis Klarides (center-rear) joins BRS teachers, administrators and students in celebrating the state-coordinated grant.



SCIENCE EDUCATION has New Generation Science Standards. Grade 6 teachers from BRS and Amity Middle School 7th grade science teachers worked together in developing understandings of the new standards and how BRS and the middle school will ensure continuity of instruction between the two levels.

Open CHOICE

THE OPEN CHOICE

PROGRAM PROVIDES an opportunity for New Haven students to attend public schools in nearby suburban towns and vice versa.

Our Board voted to add one *Open Choice* seat starting with the 2020-21 school year bringing our *Open Choice* enrollment to 18.

HVAC & Lighting Improvements

PHASE 2 IMPROVEMENTS TO OUR HVAC system were completed over the December break. We expect to experience the benefits of these enhancements, especially during hot and humid weather.

Lighting Upgrade: The town will soon be initiating their LED lighting upgrade at BRS.



BEHAVIORIST AND CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST Dr. Deborah Kraemer, Associate Professor at SCSU, will address the topic **Guiding Young Children's Home use of Technology while Promoting Family Relationships.**

You're invited to this informative *Superintendent's Academy* workshop. The presentation follows a brief PTO session on Feb. 26 in Beecher Road School Library.
6-6:30 PM - PTO Information Session
6:30-8:00 PM - Dr. Kraemer's presentation.