

Whiting Wire



Whiting Lane School 47 Whiting Lane West Hartford, CT 06119 Telephone 860-233-8541 Fax 860-236-9367

Dr. Nancy DePalma, Interim Principal

Greetings from the Interim Principal

December 8, 2016

***Disclaimer:** I actually first wrote a version of this for a December 18, 2008 Principal's Message. It really hasn't lost its meaning so I hope you'll enjoy the read, perhaps a second time for some? It's been updated with new information. Thanks!*

Holiday Greetings!

"If wishes were horses, beggars would ride."
(- English proverb turned nursery rhyme)
"If wishes were fishes, we'd all cast nets."
(- Variation of above)

When I was 8, I wished like crazy for a full cowgirl outfit. I got it. When I was 10, I wished all the harder for white booted ice skates. I got them. As a result of wishes come true early on, I think I've become the world's greatest believer in wishes. Birthday candles, falling stars, wishbones, eyelashes, dandelions gone to seed, coins in wells – you name it and I'll wish on it. For example, not satisfied just to wish on the first evening star, I even made up a derivative rhyme for the first morning star. It's not very original but it does serve to provide another possibility of securing a longed for yearning. For those of us who support the notion of wishes, we're smack in the middle of the "just believe" season. I figure, what have you got to lose. Go for it. Our children are experts at this. We can learn a lot from them. The older I get, the more my wishes seem to be aligned with hope, and the objects I yearn for, while far less materialistic in origin, are far more valuable. Good health, a peace-filled year ahead, the well being of family and friends, that Whiting Lane School makes substantial academic growth in all assessment subgroups – you get the idea. I've also come to understand (regrettably) that wishing doesn't make it so and that an "I wish" mentality has to be coupled with action on my part in order for things to happen. I've also come to understand (with equal regret), that even the most well intentioned actions might not bring things to reality. As we face the remaining days before our recess, take some time to bring some much needed balance into your child's life. It's perfectly OK to wish for certain holiday gifts and to get them. Be mindful as well of the little consumer you may be fostering and the unrealistic expectations that can too often be created under the guise of "everyone else has one." The economic realities we face actually can provide teachable moment opportunity for our children to learn a great life lesson. Try having a conversation about the difference between needs and wants (there's those wishes again). For those of us who remember the Rolling Stones, consider their message:

"You can't always get what you want. But if you try sometimes, you might find, you get what you need."

And don't forget the real meaning behind my favorite quote above; that is, if wishing could make things happen, then even the most destitute people would have everything they wanted. Unfortunately, most often, they don't even get what they need. Think about making a wish for them this season and see what you and your children can do to make it come true. Hey, here's another thing I'm wishing for – that you will all join us for our **Winter Concert** to be held at **King Philip Middle School** on **Tuesday, December 13th** at **7:00 pm**.

Warmest good wishes in the days ahead for time well spent with loved ones, and what Charles Dickens described as "that happy state of companionship and mutual good will – a source of such pure an unalloyed delight."

Until next year...!

Nancy 😊

P.S. Is that our very own **Mary Margaret H.** performing in the Nutcracker with the Hartt School Community Division Dance Department's Nutcracker cast? If you can't catch her on December 15th at the University of Hartford, she'll be dancing right here on December 12th! How cool is that!



Please refer to the 2016-2017 WHPS Elementary Handbook (page 8) for detailed guidelines on when to keep your child home from school.

When should I keep my child home from school?

If your child has flu symptoms (fever, chills, cough, headache, or muscle aches that often come on quickly) keep him or her home. If your child has a cold (stuffy nose, sneezing, sore throat, cough, often coming on gradually), there is no fever for 24 hours, symptoms are mild, and your child is alert, then he or she may attend school.

Germs are spread from person to person through coughing, sneezing, direct contact and occasionally from contaminated surfaces. The flu vaccine is the best way to prevent your child from getting the flu. To prevent the spread of colds and flu, practice good hand washing, disinfect frequently touched surfaces, cover nose and mouth with a tissue or cough into your sleeve. Ensure that there is no sharing of cups, water bottles or utensils. Stay healthy by obtaining sufficient rest, exercise and maintaining good nutrition and fluid intake.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call us at 860-233-8541.

Nancy Driska, RN, Karen Fiori, RN, Lisa Nowak, RN
Whiting Lane and ELC School Nurses

News from Technology Services Public Act 16-189

We believe that it is vital for all students in West Hartford Public Schools to be able to efficiently and effectively use digital tools that empower them in all phases of the learning process, including research, problem solving, content creation, communication, and collaboration. We also believe that we must be committed at all times to protecting students' privacy and providing them with a powerful and safe educational experience. To that end, the West Hartford Public Schools follow the legal requirements of Public Act 16-189 to promote the safety and security of all students and staff.

In compliance with Connecticut State Law, we update online programs used within the district that house student data. The programs may be used district-wide, in a very small number of classrooms, or with individual students. The list will be updated each time the district enters into a new contract where student data is housed. For more information on the specifics of Public Act 16-189 and updates of vendor agreements, visit www.whps.org/pa189.

Special Notice to 5th Grade Parents Bristow Middle School Enrollment Process

Bristow Middle School will be holding its enrollment for the incoming 6th graders in January. Bristow Middle School is a school of choice, drawing its diverse population from all neighborhoods in West Hartford. In the 2017-2018 school year, Bristow will enroll 420 students in grades 6 through 8.

All 5th graders who reside in West Hartford and are attending West Hartford Public Schools are automatically included in this process. Other 5th graders who reside in West Hartford and attend a private, parochial or inter district magnet school like

The University of Hartford Magnet School are also eligible, although they need to apply to be included in the process and verify they reside in West Hartford with our Residency office.

Each 5th grader will receive a number randomly, which will establish the choice order. This number will be mailed home to parents on January 19, 2017. In order to help parents make an informed choice, two informational meetings will be held at Bristow Middle School on Monday, March 6, 2017 and Thursday, March 9, 2017 at 6:30 pm. Parents can choose to attend either of these meetings as they are both the same.

Students are invited to attend these meetings with their parents.

We recommend you attend one regardless of the number your child receives so you are prepared in case we get to your child's number.

For information about Bristow and full details about how this enrollment process works, please visit the Bristow website at <http://bristow.whps.org>. You can also call or email the principal, Steven Cook, at 860-231-2100 or Steven_Cook@whps.org.

Recess Policy

The recess policy dictates that all students will go outside for recess if the temperature is above 20 degrees. Children should be dressed appropriately to spend time outdoors. Warm jackets, hats, and gloves are required in cold weather. Children who are well enough to attend school should be well enough to be outside for recess. Exceptions for medical reasons, with a doctor's note, will be made.

Informational Flyers/Booklets

- ⇒ December Lunch Menu
- ⇒ December 2016 Vacation Fun Camps
- ⇒ Vacation Science Camps @ Children's Museum
- ⇒ *Foundation for WHPS* Teacher Thank You Gift Forms

Early Closing/Delay of School Opening

The superintendent of schools determines the necessity for a delayed opening or emergency closing of school due to weather conditions or some other emergency.

Announcements regarding school opening delays or closings are also made over local radio and television stations.

This information also may be accessed by visiting the WHPS website at www.whps.org for school closings, cancellations and additional information.

Please do not call the school office for information on early closings/delay of school openings.

If there is a delayed opening, before school activities are cancelled. If there is a delayed opening on a Wednesday, students will be dismissed at the regular time - 2:00 pm.

If there is an early dismissal, after school activities are cancelled and WLEDC is closed.

Please be sure to be informed of delayed openings/school closings/early dismissals using the sources listed above.

Please be sure to discuss with your children the plan for your family if schools are closed early.

Attention ELC Parents

If there is a **delayed opening** due to inclement weather, ELC morning classes will be cancelled and afternoon classes will meet from 12:15-2:45 pm. All full day students will come in at the delayed opening time.

If we have an **early dismissal**, ELC morning classes will dismiss at their usual time (11:30 am) and afternoon classes are cancelled. Full day students will dismiss at 1:00 pm.

If a parent meeting, itinerant services or PPT meeting is scheduled during the delayed or missed hours, that session or meeting is cancelled and will be rescheduled.

Newsletter Submissions

Our next publication will be the "mini" newsletter.

Submission Deadline	Publication Date
12/20	12/22

Dates to Remember

12/9	7:45 am 10:00 - 11:00 am 1:45 - 3:20 pm 3:25 - 4:25 pm	Grade 5 Strings Hall High Jazz Band/gym Winter Concert Dress Rehearsal/Aud French Club/Art room
12/12	1:45 - 2:15 pm 2:30 - 3:00 pm 3:20 - 4:15 pm 3:50 - 5:30 pm 6:30 - 7:15 pm	Nutcracker Performance - Gr 3-5/Aud Nutcracker Performance - Gr K-2Aud Homework Center/Room 4 Art Quest @ KPM ELC Gingerbread Houses/cafe
12/13	7:45 am 9:30 am 3:20 - 4:15 pm 3:30 pm 7:00 pm	Grade 4 & 5 Choirs Winter Concert @ WL Auditorium Homework Center/Room 4 Faculty Meeting Winter Concert @ KPM
12/14	8:45 am - noon 6:30 - 7:30 pm	Grade 5 Science Programs/Room 1 Cub Scouts/cafe
12/15	3:20 - 4:15 pm 3:20 - 4:30 pm 6:00 - 7:30 pm	Homework Center/Room 4 Grade 5 Girl Scouts/Art room Chess Club/cafe
12/16	2:45 pm	Birthday Party/cafe
12/19	3:20 - 4:15 pm	Homework Center/Room 4
12/20	3:20 - 4:15 pm 6:00 - 7:30 pm	Homework Center/Room 4 Bear Den Meeting/cafe
12/21	6:30 - 7:30 pm	Cub Scouts/cafe
12/22	3:20 - 4:15 pm 3:20 - 4:30 pm 6:00 - 7:30 pm	Homework Center/Room 4 Grade 4 Girl Scouts/Art room Chess Club/cafe
12/25		Christmas (Christianity)
12/25 - 1/1/17		Chanukah * (Judaism)
12/26 - 1/2/17		NO SCHOOL - Holiday Recess

* All holy days begin at sunset the day before.

PJ Day for the Kids

Friday, December 9, 2016



Please join team *whitinglane* - make a donation and make a difference on the sixth annual PJ Day for the Kids!

Donate a \$1 or more and wear your PJs to school in support of the kids at Connecticut Children's Medical Center who wear their PJs while fighting cancer and other serious illnesses.

Please visit <http://pjday.kintera.org> and help them to raise funds and spirits!



Winter Concert



**Tuesday, December 13, 2016
7:00 pm
King Philip Middle School**

Grade 4/5 Choir, Grade 5 Band, Grade 5 Strings

Choir members are responsible for the following performance attire (please no jeans or sneakers):

Girls – white collared blouse, black skirt or pants, black shoes

Boys – white collared dress shirt, black pants, black shoes

Please notify the music teachers if there is a problem acquiring the appropriate performance attire.

Thank You!!!



Thanks to the Grade 5 Girl Scouts for the beautiful winter plantings by the main entrance.

It's not too late to enroll your child in KIDS Group!

Kids In Divorce and Separation: the KIDS Group at Whiting Lane School is forming for the 2016-2017 school year. The KIDS Group is for children whose families are experiencing separation from other family members due to divorce, separation, death of a loved one or other circumstances of loss. Children experiencing separation are often in need of extra caring at a time when parents are also struggling with difficult issues. Children in grades 1-5 join together weekly after school in a safe and positive club-like setting with other children experiencing family adjustments.

There is no charge, but parent/guardian permission is required. The program is facilitated by Mrs. Colleen Murphy Hilliard, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist from The Bridge Family Center.

For more information, please contact Janet Gregorian-Michaelsen, School Social Worker at Whiting Lane School at Janet_Gregorian-Michaelsen@whps.org or 860-233-8541 (x 5862).

The KIDS Group meets after school from **3:20 - 4:20 pm** on Thursdays and began on **December 1, 2016**.

Outstanding Whiting Lane Students (OWLS)

As part of our school-wide effort to explicitly teach and motivate the students to live our code of being “respectful and responsible, making good choices and always taking care of each other,” the faculty and staff have been handing out blue OWLETs (Otstanding Whiting Lane Expectation Tickets).

The students are handed an OWLET when they have been observed living our code. On Friday afternoons, the number of tickets earned by Whiting Lane/ELC students is totaled. Three tickets are pulled at random and the lucky winners are announced over the loud speaker. The three winners receive a special OWL water bottle. A group photo of the winners for each month will be taken and displayed on a bulletin board in the main office.

Please join our Whiting Lane and ELC Community as we congratulate our November OWLS winners:

Aaron A., Jack D., Izu N., Chasdiel S-R., Zachary S., Gabe S., Michael H., Jeremiah M. and Josh P.

The following bus students were recognized for demonstrating outstanding bus behavior in November:

Vera H., Lily M. and Jamie B.

Thank You!!!

Thanks to our wonderful PTO and parent volunteers for providing delicious and nutritious snacks for teachers during Parent Teacher Conference Week. Your generous hospitality was greatly appreciated!

Notes from the Music Room

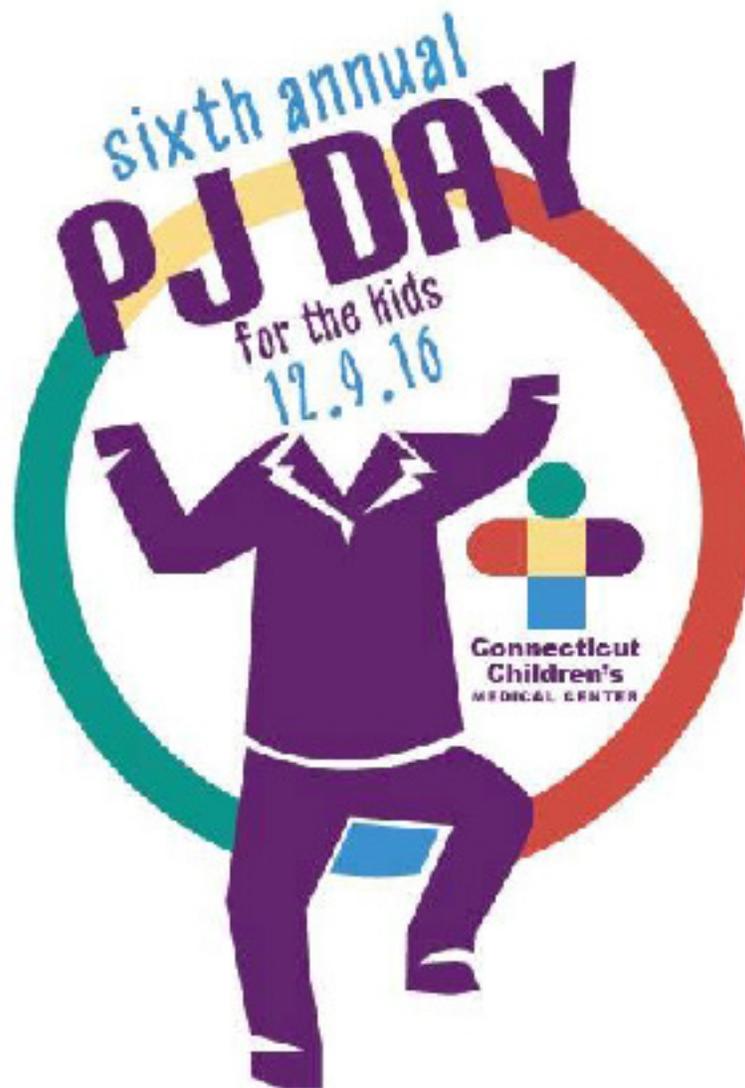


Please ask your students about what they are learning in music class. Every month the students learn about a famous musician in history. George Frideric Handel is our musician for the month of December. Please ask your student(s) what they have learned about him!

Here is a song for each grade that you can ask your student(s) to sing for you!

Kindergarten - “Frosty Weather”
1st Grade - “Apple Tree”
2nd Grade - “Plainsies Clapsies”
3rd Grade - “Frog in the Meadow”
4th Grade - “Fed My Horse”
5th Grade - “Shangai Chicken”

Thank you, Ms Rooklidge



Join in on Friday December 9, 2016

In Support of kids at Connecticut Children's Medical Center

Donate \$1 or more in exchange for the privilege of wearing PJs to school!

Stand together with patients at Connecticut Children's who wear their PJs for days, weeks or longer while fighting cancer and other illnesses

Help us Raise Funds and Spirits!

Checks accepted and can be made out to Connecticut Children's Medical Center Foundation

All proceeds benefit the Division of Hematology and Oncology at Connecticut Children's Medical Center

For info or to donate online visit: www.pjday.kintera.org

From the Curriculum Corner by Sally Pardee

Have you heard your child's teacher use the acronym, SST, and are still wondering what it's all about?

SST (Student Success Team) is a team of professionals that includes but is not limited to: the classroom teacher, Reading Specialist, Curriculum Specialist, Principal, Speech and Language Pathologist, Resource Teacher, Social Worker, School Psychologist and English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teacher. This group of educators meet weekly to collaborate and create a comprehensive plan for students who may be struggling in one or more particular area.

How do we know which students will be discussed during SST meetings? Data from universal screeners (AIMSweb) are used in addition to classroom and district work samples and assessments. We work as a team to triangulate data and determine if a student needs intervention.

SRBI (Scientific Research-Based Interventions) and RTI (Response to Intervention) are synonymous and were adopted by CT in 2008. They both follow the same process of using teaching practices of high quality instruction. This process supports teachers and monitors student progress while focusing on the specific needs of learners to provide ongoing, targeted instruction over a period time. The underlying intent is to ensure that all students learn and acquire the requisite academic and behavioral competencies necessary for success in school, in life, and in society.

During the SST meeting, the team decides upon specific interventions and to which Tier the student falls.

Tier I is standards-based classroom learning where all students receive high quality, standards-based, culturally responsive, differentiated instruction based on curriculum.

Tier II includes short-term supplemental interventions by an interventionist for students who have not responded adequately to the general education core curriculums and differentiation of instruction. An IPP (Individual Performance Plan) is created for the student.

Tier III is a more intensive intervention for students not making the expected progress with Tier I and Tier II instruction. Frequency, duration and intensity of interventions change in conjunction with discussions at the SST meeting.

Tier IV integrates an inclusive delivery model of specialized educational services for student with disabilities. This also includes a continuum of educational resources, integrating both general education, tiered interventions, and special education services based on individual student needs. Students moving from T3 to T4 must go through the PPT process (Planning and Placement Team).



All 4 tiers are part of a comprehensive educational system. Therefore, the tiers should not be viewed as categorical placements or as "gates" to special education.

Throughout the SST process student progress is closely monitored.



A Great Holiday Gift For Teachers

The Foundation for the West Hartford Public Schools' *Teacher Thank-You Gift* program is a great way to acknowledge wonderful and talented teachers.

Make a tax-deductible donation to the Foundation of \$10 or more per teacher. Teachers receive a special card indicating a gift has been made in their honor. These gifts support our Teacher Grant program investing funds back in our schools for various educational programs.

The Foundation is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization dedicated to raising money from the community to invest in our schools. For more information, visit our website at www.fwhps.org, call 860-561-8755 or email us at fwhps@westhartfordct.gov.



Teacher Gift Order Form

Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____

Parent's Name _____ Student's Name _____

Street Address: _____ City/Zip _____ Phone _____

Email: _____

Teacher's Name(s) _____

School _____

Send certificate to me OR Send to my teacher

Please make checks (\$10 minimum per teacher) payable to Foundation for West Hartford Public Schools and send to 50 S. Main St., Room 420, W. Hartford, CT 06107. Contributions are tax-deductible. **DEADLINE: 12/15/16**

