

# Whiting Wire



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

Ms. Karen Kukish, Principal

Greetings from the Principal

October 8, 2015

The crisp, cool weather of fall is a welcome change of season and as always we are hard at work here at Whiting Lane! The school year is well under way, and our faculty and staff are very busy in the classrooms working with students to teach and reinforce essential skills and concepts at each grade level. It was wonderful to see all of you at Curriculum Night in September. The teachers worked very hard to prepare presentations that were thorough, informative, and engaging. Again, I thank you for the incredible level of support that you show for our faculty on a regular basis. Establishing a positive home-school connection with open lines of communication is critical to your child's success in school, and all of us here at Whiting Lane share this fundamental belief. We truly appreciate the unwavering support of our parents, as we work towards our school goal of increased levels of parent outreach and engagement. In addition, this year's "**Fall Into Fun**" adult social and fundraiser was a huge success! My gratitude is extended to all who participated, in particular my faculty and staff for volunteering coveted auction items and **Molly and Sam Smith** for their gracious hospitality. Countless PTO members and parents gave of their time and energy to ensure the evening was a spectacular event – a true team effort! We are so blessed to have such a tremendous group of dedicated families.

As we are all aware, a healthy and well-balanced morning meal provides energy and helps to prepare students for success throughout the day. We are so delighted to be able to offer our school breakfast program for a second consecutive year. Participating students enter the cafeteria from 8:15-8:35 AM each day to enjoy a hearty breakfast which includes whole grains, fruit and milk. This is a wonderful opportunity that is open to all of our kids – the complete meal is just \$1.25. Please contact the Whiting Lane cafeteria if you would like to adjust your child's meal account to include breakfast. Students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches automatically qualify for free breakfast. A huge thank you to our wonderful parent **Yvonne Martanez** for her willingness to assist us every morning in the cafeteria. Her help and support is greatly appreciated! This week we celebrated our first "Walk to School Day" of the year, coordinated by **Physical Education teachers Dylan Geisler and Judy Wilcox**. This event promotes physical activity, teaching safe pedestrian skills to children, and environmental conservation efforts to reduce pollution and traffic congestion. A great time was had by all of our students and families.

Best practices in math instruction and continuous improvement and professional development in this area is a huge focus for us this year at Whiting Lane. We are working with our district math instructional coach and our **Quest teacher, Chris Kueffner**, to provide opportunities for **all** students to advance their achievement levels in math and cultivate a love of the subject area. We are pleased to offer "**Family Math Night**", coordinated by our teachers under the direction of **Curriculum Specialist Sally Pardee**. It will be held on **October 21st at 5:00 PM** and will incorporate all grade levels, ELC through grade five. We are excited to share our curriculum with you, and make math "come alive" through games and various learning activities. We look forward to seeing you there!

As always, I'd like to conclude by saying **thank you** for your support of our school and our continuous efforts to **do what is best for kids**, each and every day. Whiting Lane is truly a close knit community, always modeling the code and "*taking care of each other.*"

Sincere regards,

**Karen**

Karen Kukish, Principal

## From the Health Room



### 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

## West Hartford Special Education PTO (SEPTO) News

Wednesday, October 21, 2015  
7:00-9:00 pm  
Sedgwick Middle School

*Where Do You Start?  
Addressing the Mental Health Needs of Children*

Join West Hartford's Supervisor of Psychological Services Stacey Kellog-Shove and social work staff to hear about West Hartford's new initiatives to identify and support children with mental health needs. Other community services will also be discussed.

## InView Test of Cognitive Skills

During the third week of October, all third graders will take the InView Test of Cognitive Skills. It is part of our town wide testing program and the purpose of the test is to provide information on students' ability to think rather than on their achievement. The test takes approximately two hours and is completed in multiple sessions. Your assistance in assuring your child is well rested and present in school during this week will be helpful.

## Vacant Seat Program – Application Start Date Monday, October 5, 2015



The West Hartford Public Schools vacant seat program utilizes available space on school buses. This program allows students to ride buses, where space is available, who under the West Hartford Public Schools Transportation policy are not eligible for transportation.

**No additional bus stops are added to the routes for this program.**

Interested parents should contact the West Hartford Public Schools Transportation Office at 860-561-6647 for additional information after **October 5th**.

**Requests are taken in this office by telephone on a first come, first served basis starting at 8:00 am.**

## ELC Lottery Applications



The Early Learning Center at Whiting Lane School and Aiken Elementary School is now accepting applications for the 2016-2017 school year. The program is family centered and has half day sessions that meet four days a week. A lottery will be conducted in January.

To be considered for the program, children must be three years old by September 1, 2016, toilet-trained by the start of the school year and exhibit age-appropriate language, social and play skills. All applicants must participate in a play-based screening prior to being considered for the lottery selection.

If you are interested, please contact Pam Macca at 860-233-1455. The application process will close on **November 30, 2015**.

## Important Reminders to Parents

### Emergency Contact Information

Please call the school office at 860-233-8541 if any of your contact information changes during the school year. It is very important that we have the correct home/work/cell phone numbers so we can contact you in case of an emergency.

### Have you Moved?

If you move to another address in West Hartford (even within the neighborhood), you must contact the Residency Office (561-6620) located in the Town Hall at 50 South Main Street. Addresses cannot be changed in the school office without notification from the Residency Office.

### Before/After School Supervision

Children must **not** arrive at school before **8:20 am** as there is no supervision on school grounds prior to that time. Students may arrive early only if they are attending specific school scheduled and supervised activities.

Children are dismissed at **3:20 pm** on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and at **2:00 pm** on Wednesday.

Parents/guardians are responsible for prompt pick up of their child if he/she is not taking the bus or walking home.

## PTO News

The October PTO meeting will be held **TONIGHT at 7:00 pm** in the Whiting Lane Library. We encourage all parents of Whiting Lane students to join us - we hope to see you there!

### Sign Up to Receive PTO Emails

Stay in touch with the Whiting Lane PTO by signing up to receive PTO email blasts. This will keep you updated about upcoming events and other school announcements.

Please visit [www.whitinglaneppto.net](http://www.whitinglaneppto.net), enter your email address and then hit subscribe.

## Newsletter Submissions

Our next publication will be the "mini" newsletter.

Submission Deadline	Publication Date
<b>10/20</b>	<b>10/22</b>

## Dates to Remember

10/8	7:45 am 6:30 - 7:30 pm 7:00 pm	Grade 5 Choir Grade 5 Girl Scouts/café PTO Meeting/Library
10/9	7:45 am 3:25 - 4:25 pm	Grade 5 Strings Friday French/Art room.
10/12		NO SCHOOL - Columbus Day
10/13	3:30 pm	Faculty Meeting - café
10/14	7:45 am	Grade 5 Band
10/15	7:45 am 7:15 pm	Grade 4 & 5 Choirs WL Ski Club Info Meeting/cafe
10/16	7:45 am 3:25 - 4:25 pm	Grade 5 Strings Friday French/Art room
10/19	3:20 - 4:30 pm 3:25 - 4:25 pm 3:30 - 4:30 pm	Grade 3 Brownies/Art room Monday French/Music room Chess Club/café
10/20	9:15 - 11:20 am 12:30 - 2:20 pm	ELC - AM Field Trip to 4-H Farm ELC - PM Field Trip to 4-H Farm
10/21	7:45 am 2:45 pm 5:00 - 6:00 pm 6:00 - 7:30 pm 7:00 pm	Grade 5 Band Grade 3-5 Town Wide X-Country Run Family Math Night/café, gym, ELC Cub Scouts/café SEPTO Meeting @ Sedgwick
10/22	7:45 am 9:15 am - 12:45 pm 9:30 - 11:30 am	Dussehra/Durga Puja (Hinduism) Grade 4 & 5 Choirs Bus Evacuation Drill/bus loop Kindergarten Field Trip to Pickin' Patch
10/23	7:45 am 2:45 pm 3:25 - 4:25 pm	Grade 5 Strings Birthday Party/cafe Friday French/Art room.

\* All holy days begin at sunset the day before

## Dress for the Weather



Fall weather is changeable, with summer temperatures one day, winter temperatures the next. Please take a few minutes each morning to listen to the weather forecast so your child is dressed appropriately for the day.

Remember, if your child is well enough to go to school, he/she is well enough to go outside for recess.

## Notes from the Music Room



Dear Parents,

**The 4th and 5th Grade Choirs will start combined rehearsals on Thursday, October 15, 2015 at 7:45 am in the music room.** The 4th grade choir will no longer rehearse on Tuesdays, but will come to rehearsals with the 5th grade once a week on Thursday mornings for the remainder of the semester.

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

Kindergarten - "Bounce High, Bounce Low"  
1<sup>st</sup> Grade - "Rain Rain"  
2<sup>nd</sup> Grade - "Let Us Chase the Squirrel"  
3<sup>rd</sup> Grade - "Paw Paw Patch"  
4<sup>th</sup> Grade - "My Paddle"  
5<sup>th</sup> Grade - "Viva La Musica"

Thank you,  
Ms. Rooklidge

## 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 (Outstanding 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 students is totaled. Ms. Kukish pulls three tickets at random and announces the lucky winners 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 September OWLS winners!

The winners for the month of September were:

Frederik N., Charlie K., Callie L., Isabelle I.,  
Jillian B., Ben P., Robert B., Mason M., Bella T.,  
Matan F., Omar A. and Riley V.

## Town Wide Cross Country Run

The annual Town Wide Cross Country Run for Grades 3-5 will be held on **Wednesday, October 21, 2015 at Charter Oak Elementary School** (rain date is 10/28/15). The race begins at **2:45 pm** - please be there 15 minutes prior to the start. **A parent must accompany each child and be present during the event.**

Please return permission slips to Mrs. Wilcox or Mr. Geisler.

## Lost and Found

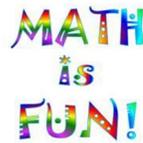
We already have items in the "lost and found" in the hallway behind the cafeteria. **Please label** your child's belongings for easier identification.

## Be a Mentor

To learn more about mentoring and how you can make a difference in the life of a young person, please plan to attend the Fall Mentor Program Workshop on:

**Tuesday, October 20, 2015**  
**6:30-7:45 pm**  
**Conard High School**  
**110 Beechwood Road, West Hartford**

For more information and to register, please call (860) 231-6009.



**Whiting Lane**  
**Family Math Night**  
**October 21, 2015**  
**5:00-6:00 pm**  
**Whiting Lane School**



ELC Math Games in the ELC wing  
Grades K-2 Math Games in the Gym  
Grades 3-5 Math Games in the Cafeteria

Are you interested in seeing what your child is learning in math and how math is reinforced with math games?

Come and enjoy playing fun math games with your child. Your child will teach you how to play and show you what they know! Please stay with your child(ren) and try out as many games and activities as you would like.



## From the Curriculum Corner

Sally Pardee, Curriculum Specialist

### Writers' Workshop is back!

This year our K-5 teaching staff is using an approach to teaching the craft of writing through the implementation of the Writers' Workshop model. Children learn to be good writers by writing, writing frequently, for extended periods of time, for an audience and with purpose. The first month of school has been dedicated to teaching students about "Creating a Community of Writers". During this time period, teachers have instructed students about what a Writer's Workshop looks like, sounds like and how it functions efficiently.

After the introductory unit, students will be instructed on Opinion Writing, Informational Writing and Narrative Writing (not necessarily in that order). The writing block begins with a 5-15 minute mini lesson with a focus on one topic of writing instruction. The teacher may share a sample of their own writing, a sample of someone else's writing, a mentor text specific to the unit or genre being studied, or a shared writing piece that the class is working on together. The rest of the writing block (30-40 minutes) is devoted to writing and practicing the skill. Students may have multiple pieces in draft form throughout the year. They will be working on topics of their choice with the end goal of publishing their work and sharing with their peers. As students are writing, teachers are circling the room to conference with students individually or in small groups. Teachers will use this time to share ideas on how students can make their writing more clear, coherent and purposeful. They will help students to set writing goals and work together to achieve the goals. The writing block ends with a review of the mini lesson and a quick sharing of student work.

What can you do to help support your child with writing? Encourage your child to write stories at home, make lists, keep a reading journal where they may ask the author questions about the story or share an opinion about how the story is unfolding. Have them write a letter to a pen pal or family member and mail it the old fashioned way! Having a writing notebook for your child to draw and write in is a fabulous way to encourage them to write more. Writing can be cathartic and help students to work through difficult situations. Being able to write what is special and important to them are the seeds of future published works.

# MENTORING 101

**Mentor Today, Make a Difference Tomorrow.**

## West Hartford Public Schools Fall Mentor Program Workshop

Learn more about mentoring and how YOU can make a difference in the life of a young person. Hear first-hand how mentoring works.

**Tuesday, October 20, 2015**

**6:30 – 7:45 p.m.\*\***

**Conard High School**

**110 Beechwood Road, West Hartford  
(enter Conard's main entrance - signage  
will direct you to room 169)**

\*\*Please join us for light refreshments at 6:15 p.m.

This session facilitated by Dr. Susan Weinberger will:

- Highlight program guidelines
- Discuss why mentoring is vital in our schools
- Provide tools and strategies to become an effective mentor
- Hear panelists share about their experiences

## Dr. Susan Weinberger President, Mentor Consulting Group

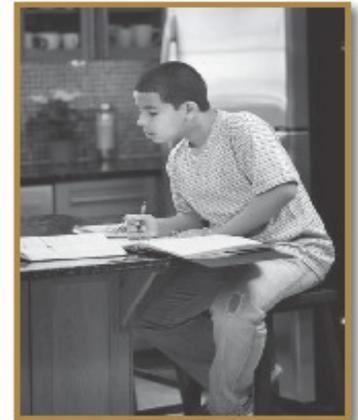
Dr. Weinberger, better known as "Dr. Mentor," has been recognized for her expertise in establishing, maintaining and evaluating youth and adult mentoring programs for schools, colleges, corporations and communities and school-to-work initiatives.

Hosted by: Carol Wilkas  
West Hartford Public Schools  
Mentor Program Coordinator

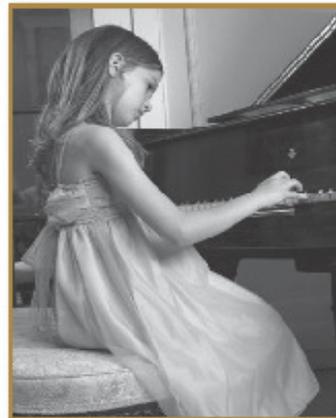
For more information and to register,  
please call **(860) 231-6009**.



**Improve Attitude**



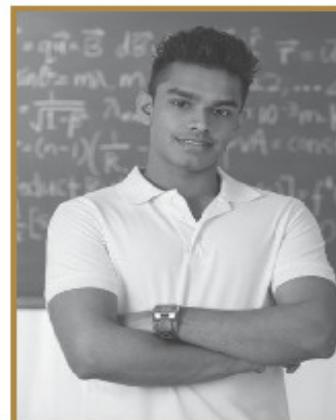
**Raise  
Academic Performance**



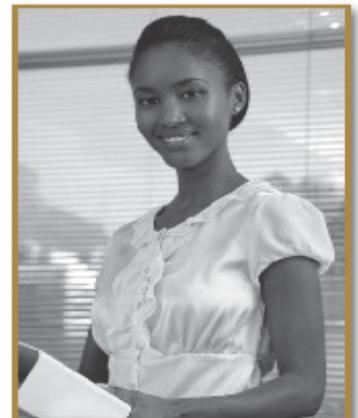
**Promote Self Respect**



**Build Self-Esteem**



**Increase School Attendance**



**Prepare the Workforce  
of the future**



Together we can make a difference. A partnership of business and community.