

# 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

September 10, 2015

Dear Whiting Lane Families,

We are very excited to welcome you to a brand new school year here at Whiting Lane! Despite our recent heat wave we are off to a terrific start, and I'd like to extend my gratitude for your incredible level of support of our faculty and staff. Your efforts are much appreciated, as we are all aware of the critical importance of a positive home-school connection and the impact it has on a child's success in school. We continue to focus on our communication efforts with families, and I always welcome your ideas and suggestions. Working together, we will make our school the best possible learning environment for our kids! This week we have made concerted efforts as a staff to rotate classes through air conditioned spaces in the building, drink plenty of water and take frequent breaks to rest and relax. We are all looking forward to some cooler temperatures!

I'd like to give special thanks to the **Cub Scouts and their leaders** for their integral role in our opening day flag ceremony, as well as our **fabulous PTO** under the direction of co-presidents **Myra Wahl and Andrew O'Toole**, for the beautiful luncheon held for staff, as well as their multitude of efforts to ensure that our opening week was a success. In addition, a **huge thank you to our PTO** for providing us with some wonderful improvements to our playground area. We are the lucky beneficiaries of new benches and trees, as well as brand new basketball hoops! I am so very grateful for the support of our parent community, it is certainly unparalleled.

We have hit the ground running here at Whiting Lane, and we have several learning initiatives in place as we begin the school year. We will face many new challenges and continue to focus our efforts on best practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment as we ensure that ALL students have "Clear Paths, Bright Futures, and No Limits." Our common core state standards have permeated the classroom curriculum at each grade level in both mathematics and language arts, with rigorous learning standards in place and high expectations for all students. Our instructional practices continue to provide opportunities for our students to: think critically and apply new knowledge, create and problem solve, engage in research-based projects, focus on important reading and writing skills, engage in collaborative conversations, and discover cross-disciplinary connections. In addition to our focus on academics, we are also committed to improving student behavior and reinforcing positive character traits on a daily basis. Our highly successful **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)** school wide initiative continues to be utilized as a vehicle to teach and promote appropriate, respectful behaviors in all school settings. This past Friday we held our first school-wide assembly in the gymnasium to review our "OWLET" ticket reward system, an incentive to promote positive interactions between students and every staff member. We showed videos starring our own talented student actors and actresses demonstrating responsible and appropriate behavior in the hallways, cafeteria, bus, and classrooms. I'd like to extend my gratitude to the school leaders who have spent a considerable amount of time to ensure that this program is a success - **Dr. Teri Bish**, our school psychologist, and **PBIS team coaches Ms. Carrie Blanchard and Mrs. Karen Bridges**. I truly appreciate all of their hard work and dedication. The entire school has really come out to support this initiative, which pleases us all.

I look forward to seeing everyone on **Curriculum Night**, held this year on **Thursday, September 17th from 6:00 - 7:40 PM**. This is a wonderful opportunity to hear from classroom teachers and support staff about our overall expectations and upcoming events throughout the school year. Please check the schedule carefully for your grade level's particular timeframe. Also, please mark your calendars for our annual "**Fall into Fun**" adult social and fundraiser, held on **Saturday, September 19th**. I'm looking forward to seeing you there! As always, 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

### Hearing and Vision Screenings

The school nurses will be conducting hearing and vision screenings during the months of September and October. If a child does not pass the initial screening, we will rescreen as soon as possible. If the child still does not pass the second screening, you will get a Referral Letter from the nurse. You will then be expected to contact your child's primary care provider and make arrangements to have him or her evaluated as soon as possible.

A failed vision screening can indicate the need for glasses to correct vision and/or to prevent permanent vision loss in the case of children with amblyopia.

A failed hearing screening can indicate a temporary hearing loss due to significant ear wax buildup, congestion due to an upper respiratory infection, or it could indicate a permanent hearing loss.

It is extremely important that any vision or hearing loss be corrected as soon as possible because even a small loss can have a significant impact on learning.

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

Nancy Driska, RN and Karen Fiori, RN  
Whiting Lane School Nurses

### Attention Parents of Bus 25 Students

The classroom teacher(s) **AND** main office must be notified if there is a change to a bus student's afternoon dismissal plan on any given day. Bus 25 students report to the Auditorium at dismissal and check in with the bus monitors. The adult picking up must sign out the bus student(s) in the main office and pick up from the Auditorium after connecting with the bus monitors.

This helps us ensure that every bus student has been accounted for at the end of the day.

Thank you for your support and understanding.

## 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 on or 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**.

## From the Cafeteria

If you want your child to be able to buy ice cream or snack, you must specify "open account" and set a "daily limit" when you apply money to your child's account. Please write your child's full name on the memo line of the check (made payable to WHNS) or on the envelope if you send cash. The cafeteria must be notified in writing if you want to change the daily limit on your child's account.

## Important Reminders to Parents:

### Emergency Forms

Please return completed emergency forms to the office if you haven't done so already. It is very important that we have the correct home/work/cell phone numbers so we can contact you in case of an emergency. Please call the school office at 860-233-8541 if any of your contact information changes during the school year.

### 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.

### No Dogs Allowed

Dogs are **not** allowed on school property, especially during arrival and dismissal times.

Students may be allergic and/or very scared of dogs.

## Dates to Remember

9/10	7:45 am 8:45 am - 1:45 pm 7:00 pm	Grade 5 Choir Grade 4 to Westmoor Park PTO Meeting/Library
9/11	7:45 am	Grade 5 Strings
9/14		NO SCHOOL - Rosh Hashanah* (Judaism)
9/15	7:45 am	Grade 4 Choir
9/16	7:45 am 6:00 - 7:30 pm	Grade 5 Band Cub Scouts/cafe
9/17	7:45 am 6:00 - 7:40 pm	Grade 5 Choir Curriculum Night
9/18	7:45 am	Grade 4 Choir, Grade 5 Band
9/24	7:45 am	Grade 5 Strings
9/19	6:30 - 10:00 pm	"Fall into Fun" Adult Social
9/21		
9/22	7:45 am	Grade 4 Choir
9/23		NO SCHOOL - Yom Kippur* (Judaism)
9/24	7:45 am	Eid al-Adha* (Islam) Grade 5 Choir
9/25	7:45 am 2:45 pm	Grade 5 Strings Birthday Party/cafe

\* All holy days begin at sunset the day before

## School Picture Day



Whiting Lane Picture Day is **Thursday, October 1st**.

ELC Picture Day is **Friday, October 2nd**.

Absentee/Retake Day is **Thursday, November 12th**.

Order forms from Geskus Photography will be sent home with your child at a later date.



## Thank you!!!



A special thanks to Myra Wahl, Andrew O'Toole, Linda Howley and all their volunteers for organizing the delicious "Welcome Back to School" luncheon.

We have an assortment of serving dishes and utensils that were left behind - please check in the staff room or on the table outside the main office.

## Curriculum Night

Curriculum Night will be held from **6:00 - 7:40 pm** on **Thursday, September 17th**.

The Curriculum Night schedule is attached to this newsletter.

## Newsletter

Our next publication will be the "mini" newsletter.

Submission Deadline	Publication Date:
<b>9/22</b>	<b>9/24</b>

## Please Welcome the 2015-2016 Whiting Lane Code Crew!

by Sally Pardee, C.S.



This year we have once again initiated a Whiting Lane “Code Crew” to increase leadership opportunities and expand caring opportunities in our school for our 5th grade students.

Sixteen students were selected last June and have already started their new job as a Code Crew member.

The Code Crew is based on a national program called the Safety Patrol. This safety program has been implemented across the United States and started in the early 1920’s. Today more than 500,000 members are on duty each day of the school year, helping classmates in schools and at crossings near schools. Several other West Hartford elementary schools also have a Safety Patrol in place with very good success.

These sixteen responsible students will serve as role models and helpers throughout the school. They will help with morning entry and during dismissal time keeping lines orderly and helping to maintain a softer volume as students move through the hallways to walk home, be picked up, or go to their bus. Two members also lead the younger students to their bus line and help them board.

Thank you Whiting Lane Code Crew members! We are happy to have you working to make Whiting Lane the best!

The Code Crew students for the 2015-2016 school year are:  
Dawson B., Enderson G., Jane G., Pamba H.,  
Patrick K., Olivia L., Jenny M., Sofia M., Meredith N.,  
Adriana P., Lucas P., Erin R., Sam S., Mattie S.,  
Camille T. and Emma W.

## Informational Flyers/Booklets

Please check the parent self help rack in the main office for the following informational flyers and booklets:

- ⇒ August/September lunch menu
- ⇒ 2015-2016 School Year Calendar
- ⇒ WHPS *Connections*
- ⇒ Room Parent Volunteer Form
- ⇒ French Club Registration Form
- ⇒ Boy Scout/Girl Scout Information
- ⇒ YMCA Fall 2015 Program Registration Form

## Recognition of Religious Holidays

The following calendar reflects dates for religious holidays during the 2015-2016 school year.

<b>July</b>	7/17 Eid al-Fitr* (Islam)
<b>August</b>	8/15 Obon (Buddhism)
<b>September</b>	9/14-9/26 Rosh Hashanah* (Judaism) 9/23 Yom Kippur* (Judaism) 9/24 Eid al-Adha* (Islam)
<b>October</b>	10/22 Dussehra/Durga Puja (Hinduism)
<b>November</b>	11/11 Diwali/Divali (Hinduism)
<b>December</b>	12/7-12/14 Chanukah* (Judaism) 12/25 Christmas (Christianity)
<b>January</b>	1/6 Epiphany/Three Kings Day (Christianity)
<b>March</b>	3/25 Good Friday (Christianity) 3/27 Easter (Christianity)
<b>April</b>	4/23-4/29 Passover* (8 days) (Judaism) 4/29 Holy Friday (Orthodox Christianity)
<b>May</b>	5/1 Pascha (Easter) (Orthodox Christianity) 5/2 Bright Monday (Orthodox Christianity) 5/14 Buddha Day - Visakha Puja (Buddhism)
<b>June</b>	6/6- 7/5 Ramadan* (Islam)

\* All holy days begin at sunset the day before.

## Parlez-vous Français?



Would you like your child to learn French? Whiting Lane’s PTO offers after school instruction by fluent French speaker Madame Schwartz.

Classes for grades **K - 2** will be held on **Mondays** from 3:25 - 4:25 pm from 9/28 through 12/7.

Classes for grades **3 - 5** will be held on **Fridays** from 3:25 - 4:25 pm from 10/2 through 12/11.

To sign up for the 10 week fall term, please complete a registration form (check your youngest child’s backpack this week). Return the form and payment of \$100 (checks should be made payable to **Whiting Lane PTO**) in an envelope marked “French Club” and send it to school with your child, or drop the envelope off in the main office.

Classes fill early, so submit your registration soon! Enrollment is not confirmed until both the completed form and payment are received.

## From the Art Room



I am very excited to be back and look forward to teaching art to our talented Whiting Lane students! I have a few tips that will help your children keep their clothes tidy during art class. I always mention to students not to wear their best outfits on their "art" day. They should wear darker clothing if at all possible.

Your child should have their OWN personal smock. The best smocks are large short sleeved men's button-down dress shirts (or I will cut the long sleeves to fit your child). The smock should be large enough to cover your child past their waist. Plastic smocks are not recommended - they are very warm to wear and restrict movement. I have some extra smocks in the art room, but they are used by many students and can be soiled.

If you have a 5th grader, I ask them to bring in one shoe (no boots, furry slippers, or puffy snow boots) to transform into an art sculpture. They can donate the shoe's mate to the art room if they like. I will also ask the 5th graders to have a "popular snack food" to create another sculpture. The student does not have to eat the snack food as they are used for realistic demonstrations. **We do not allow any peanut or peanut product snack food items.**

Fifth grade students need to have their shoes in the art room by the end of October and their snack foods (two of the same item, unopened) by the end of January.

Ms. Hop

## *"Fall into Fun"*

The 9th annual adult social to benefit Whiting Lane School will be held on **Saturday, September 19th** from **6:30 - 10:00 pm** at Sam and Molly Smith's home (62 Walbridge Road). This year's theme is Mad Men!

Silent and live auctions, raffle drawing, hors d'oeuvres and some adult beverages are included in the price.

Tickets are: \$25 per person (\$35 at the door).

Your "Fall into Fun" invitation went home last week in your youngest child's backpack. RSVPs are appreciated by **September 17th**, but walk-ins are welcome!

Please contact Sarah Townswick at [townswick@snet.net](mailto:townswick@snet.net) if you have any questions or wish to make a donation.

## From the Music Room



My name is Melissa Rooklidge, and I am the new music teacher at Whiting Lane Elementary School. I am thrilled to join the wonderful community at Whiting Lane! I'd like to share a little about myself, as we all continue to work together to make this a great year. I thoroughly enjoy teaching elementary students, and I hope they are inspired through the power of music. I have taught music and choir to K-12 students throughout Connecticut, Texas, and Italy in public school, private school, and community programs. In addition to serving as the Founding Artistic Director of the Waterbury Youth Chorus, I also recently worked in concert production at Yale University. I am currently pursuing a summers-only Master of Music Education degree with choral emphasis at Florida State University (class of 2017), and hold a Bachelor of Music Education degree with a concentration in voice from Texas Tech University.

### Important Dates:

4th Grade Choir  
Tuesdays at 7:45am in the music room  
September 8, 15, 22, 29  
October 6, 13, 20, 27

5th Grade Choir  
Thursdays at 7:45am in the music room  
September 10, 17, 24  
October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

## A Message from the Gym



Hello! Sneakers are a requirement to participate in Physical Education class. We ask that your child wear sneakers for both safety reasons and to perform at his or her best. Other footwear does not provide the support that your child needs to participate in physical activities. Please talk with your child or their teacher about which days they go to PE class. Examples of footwear that are not allowed: boots, flip flops, flats, dress shoes or clogs.

Please remember to have your children wear comfortable clothes that allow them to move freely. Please do not have your child wear dresses or jeans on the days they have PE.

Thank you,

Dylan Geisler and Judy Wilcox

## WHITING LANE SCHOOL CURRICULUM NIGHT

This is an informational presentation for parents only.

**\*\*Thursday, September 17, 2015\*\***

Classroom teachers will make presentations according to the following schedule:

GRADE	LOCATION	TIME
K	Room 20	6:00-6:30
1	Room 17	6:00-6:30
2	Room 13	6:35-7:05
3	Room 9	6:35-7:05
4	Room 2	7:10-7:40
5 Individual Classrooms:		7:10-7:40
	Mrs. Hannan- Rm. 5	
	Mrs. Torres- Portable 1	
	Mrs. Puglielli-Portable 2	
	Ms. Martin - Rm. 7	

**Special Area presentations will be as follows:**

SPECIAL AREA	LOCATION	TIME
Physical Education	Gym	6:00 - 7:10
Art	Art Room (lower level)	6:00 - 7:10

Music Information:

Chorus / Instrumental/Vocal Hall in front of Auditorium 6:00 - 7:10

Library / Media Center Library 6:00 - 7:10

Due to the individual nature of their programs for each child, the teachers in the following programs will not make K - 5 presentations, but will be available as follows:

PROGRAM	LOCATION	TIME
ESOL	ESOL Room (near cafe)	6:00 - 7:10
Literacy Support	Literacy Center	6:00 - 7:10
QuEST	Room 1	6:00 - 7:10
Speech & Language	Offices near Cafeteria	6:00 - 7:10

**Special Needs:**

Ms. Hill	Kindergarten Mtg.	6:00-6:30
Mrs. Murphy	Grade 1 Mtg.	6:00-6:30
Mrs. Thumma	Grade 2-3Mtg.	6:35-7:05
Ms. Lacroix	Grade 3 Mtg.	6:35-7:05
Mrs. Farooque	Grade 4 Mtg.	7:10-7:40
Ms. Blanchard	Grade 5 Mtg.	7:10-7:40

**Early Learning Center**

**Room 27**

**6:00-6:30**

updated 9/7/15