

# NEWS & TIDINGS

## WARWICK COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Elizabeth Musgrave, Principal

September 2016

### MAKE A DATE: YOU ARE INVITED!

**ALL-SCHOOL MEETING:** 8:50 Thurs., Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>

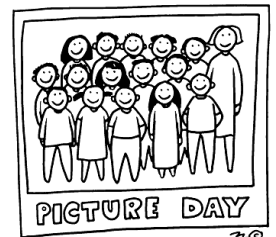
**BAND INSTRUMENT RENTAL NIGHT:** 6:30PM Wed. Sept. 21 at NES

**PICTURE DAY:** Mon., Sept. 26<sup>th</sup>



**WELCOME TO A BRAND NEW YEAR!  
HOWEVER YOU  
ARRIVED....  
WE'RE SO GLAD YOU  
ARE HERE!**

**PICTURE DAY!** Fall Picture Day is Monday, Sept. 26<sup>th</sup>. Every child will have their individual photo taken and be included in their full class picture. Photos are available for purchase, but there is no obligation. If you are unhappy with the photos taken, they may have the child re-taken on the re-take day (date TBA) or returned for a full refund.



### **FAMILY POTLUCK and OPEN HOUSE**

We hope to see you there! We can't wait to show off our school and all the great new learning we're up to! Family Potluck is 5:15-6pm, with the classrooms opening for show 6-7pm.

### **DATES have CHANGED for PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES!**

Please note the new dates:

- Nov. 16 (dismissal at 12:15pm no lunch),
- Nov. 17 (dismissal at 1:45pm)
- Nov. 18(ddismissal at 1:45pm)

Sign-ups will be at our Open House on October 6<sup>th</sup>.

## OUR CLASSROOM BUZZ...

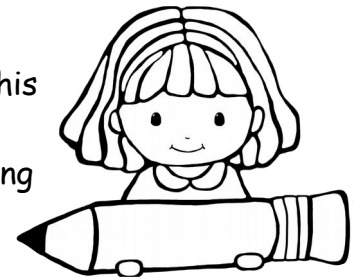


**KINDERGARTEN and Grade 1:** The children in Kindergarten and Grade 1 are settling in nicely to a new school year. During the first six weeks of school, we spend time learning classroom routines and expectations. We explore classroom materials and resource areas; we meet new teachers for special subjects like art, music and technology and talk about all the things we want to do and learn this year. Much of our time is also spent getting to know each other. These skills help set the stage for productive and friendly year of learning. The children are doing a fantastic job learning these skills!

We have started structured lessons in the Handwriting Without Tears program, 2nd Step social emotional curriculum, Math Expressions, Writing Workshop and Reading Workshop. Next week, we will begin our "Walk to Read" literacy hour where some of the children in our classroom will join students in other classrooms for reading. It is a busy, fun time in our classroom! **Ms. Allison White**

**GRADES 2 and 3:** The start of school has been different for us this year. With most of our class having been together last year, we've quickly been able to jump back into familiar routines. Our quick review of routines and expectations has allowed us to have time to explore different team and community building activities. Our class has been working on creating games with specific materials, writing directions and teaching games to other students, and solving problems together as a group.

With the first few weeks of school behind us, we're now starting to get into our regular schedule and learning blocks. This group of students has a lot that they hope to accomplish this year as they shared with their hopes and dreams, such as learning about rocks and minerals in science, reading longer and more difficult books, baking, doing a class play, and going on field trips. We're already off to a great start and I look forward to all we will continue to accomplish as the year goes on. **Ms. Kristyn Gibbs**



**GRADES 4 and 5:** The 4th and 5th graders grew so much over the summer. They are already showing such maturity and focus this school year. As a result, we have hit the ground running in 4th and 5th grade. We have crafted classroom rules and created our hopes and dreams for the new school year, too.

Our focus this year is on perseverance. We are going to work hard, even when things are tricky. We are going to try, and try, and try again. To kick off this theme we are spending a lot of time challenging ourselves in math and science.

These STEM challenges have shown us that mistakes are okay. That failure helps us to grow. That together we can achieve anything. We have worked together to create wrecking balls, to lift a balanced object, to create a structure that can hold a tennis ball, to conquer hail stone sequences, and extend patterns to the 59th term. All the while we have kept our positive attitudes and worked together as a team. We are looking forward to continuing this work over the next few weeks as well as launching our reading and writing workshop. We look forward to showing you some of our fabulous work at Open House.

**Ms. Chriss Mullen**



**GRADE 6:** The transition back to school for sixth graders has been seamless. We already know each other and our classroom routines so well that we have been able to hit the ground running with our social and academic curriculum.

One of the most exciting things for us this year is that science will be based on the 2016 Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering (STEM) Standards which has just been adopted by the state. I am part of the Pioneer Valley Regional School District's leadership team which is receiving in-depth, year-long training from Worcester Polytechnic Institute on the integration of STEM and the design process into science education. We have already begun working in small teams on specific STEM challenges such as building towers which also have to bear weight out of different materials like sheets of paper or spaghetti.

Our biggest challenge of the year will be to design and build a GaGa pit on our playground. GaGa is a kinder, gentler dodgeball game from Israel that we learned about at Cape Cod Sea Camps in June when we went on our class trip. It is played in an octagonal pit with wooden walls that stand about 4 feet high. The sides of the octagon are 8 feet long. The students are currently researching the sources and costs of materials and helping to write a Foundation for Educational Excellence grant which we hope will partially fund the project. We will also be working with Mr. John Passiglia and his 11th and 12th grade Engineering Design

students at PVR5 to help us with the project. Stay tuned for more exciting news as things unfold!



**Ms. Lynn Hansell**

**LIBRARY LEARNING!** Getting the library ready for the students' first library time was quite a thrill! This did not simply involve a feather duster, rather some thought into how best to present the library. What is a library really? What do we do there? Is it all about books? Do we really need libraries with the Internet? How do we find a book? How do we find out more about something we are really interested in? So many questions! In time I hope students will understand that no matter what the question, there is always going to be a friendly librarian out there to help students discover the answer to these questions; because librarians are always seeking the answers to these same questions themselves!

These first few weeks will allow us to all get to know one another better. Library lesson #1 however, is look after our books! We discussed the gnawing habits of pets and younger brothers and sisters, we agreed that accidental spills and smears can be avoided with sensible food and book management, we also discussed the value of placing important items in a safe spot so we know where to find them when needed. Please help your child be good caretakers of our library books!

Families may also borrow books! I will be there at the beginning and end of each day (from around 9AM-10:30 and then 1:30-3PM). You may also borrow books from the little book shelf in the foyer. Please write down your name and book title on the sheet provided. Thanks! I also encourage you to explore further in the library and I can help you find more titles.

By the way, did you know September is Library Card Sign-Up month? I encourage you, if you have not yet done so, to explore what your local library can do for you and your family. **Ms.Erika Nygard, Librarian**

**READERS CORNER: Building Reading Muscles** Having stamina, or endurance, builds strength. Stamina can apply to lots of different areas, such as exercise or practicing the flute. It also applies to reading. Teachers often think about a student's reading stamina - their ability to focus and read independently for sustained periods of time without being distracted or becoming distracting to others. Parents can help students develop reading stamina! Here's how:

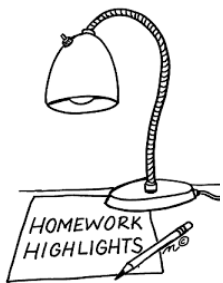
1. Vary the way the reading is done. Parents can think about this in terms of having their child "read to himself, read to someone else, and listen to

reading by others." Some combination of the three should make up the reading time, especially for new or struggling readers.

2. Choose "just right" books. If your child is at a stage of being able to read alone, help him choose books that he is able to read independently. This means he should be able to decode almost every word in the book correctly. In this situation, avoid using books that are too difficult to read alone. If your child will be reading with you, choose books that are lively and engaging.
3. Set reasonable goals. Most toddlers and preschoolers find it difficult to sit for long periods of time, even with the most engaging book! When starting out, limit book time to just a few minutes and work up from there. For elementary aged readers, consider starting with 10-15 minutes of reading time, and work up from there. Add a few minutes to your reading time every week or so.
4. Celebrate progress. Without getting too caught up on the number of minutes spent reading, celebrate the time that is spent reading. Share your favorite parts of books read, plan the next visit to the library, and share progress with other family members. Spending longer periods of time reading means fewer interruptions and more time reading what you love.

As your child moves through higher grades, having reading stamina will help him/her navigate the longer texts and assignments. These tips can help develop that stamina in your reader.

**Mr. Tom Ziniti, Reading Specialist**



**HOMWORK ROUTINES** Homework provides the practice vital to learning gains. One of the most important things that a parent can do to support the academic success is to help their child to establish good homework routines. Dedicating a quiet, well-lit space and a consistent daily time for homework makes an important statement to children about priorities and the value of school. Encouragement from you is crucial, but the work should be their own. If your child is frequently unable to finish their homework within a reasonable period of sustained effort, let the teacher know. Homework should be a challenge, not a battle - and certainly not a defeat!



**MUSICAL NOTES.** Beginning Band! Signup slips are due on Monday, September 21<sup>st</sup> for interested 4-6 grade students. WCS strongly encourages students to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity! Informational packets were distributed to students. Additional packets can be obtained from the office. Band Instrument Rental Night is 6:30-7:30 PM Wed., Sept 21<sup>st</sup> at Northfield Elementary. **Ms. Lynette Snedeker, Instrumental Music**



**ART NEWS;** Over the summer I read an article in the Boston Globe that reminded me of the amazing power of art! It was an article about a mother on Cape Cod who began painting inspirational messages on rocks and leaving them along the beach. From this small act, a movement was formed (and is still growing) called the Kindness Rocks Project. You can find out more about the project on the website [www.thekindnessrocksproject.com](http://www.thekindnessrocksproject.com). The students here at WCS are in the process of starting their own Kindness Rocks garden. Each class found inspirational and uplifting sayings and symbols and painted them on rocks that they collected with acrylic paint. Next week we will put our rocks out in the garden on display!

We like using recycled materials in the art room. If you like to donate, any of the following items would be appreciated: egg cartons (plastic and cardboard), baby food jars, newspaper, yogurt cups (all sizes)! **Ms. Hope Phelan, Art**



**FUN 'N GAMES!** Now that the beginning of the year has passed and the weather is starting to get a bit cooler....I have started planning the Turkey Trot! The trot is a non-competitive mile route around town that students, staff and families participate in while walking or running. Bernardston Elementary is always happy to host and this year will welcome both Pearl Rhodes and Warwick Community School students, staff and families to a **BIG** trot! Students from each school will be "training" from mid-October until the event. The Turkey Trot be on Wed. November 23rd (half day before Thanksgiving break). Local authorities and the Pioneer XC team also often participate. More information will go home in October. Once again, students will be invited to donate a canned good as a goodwill "entry fee" to the trot as a way for us to help support the United ARC's food pantry during the season of "giving thanks". **Sue Scott, PE Teacher**

**TECH TALK** First, I'd like to say how thrilled I am to be a member of the incredible WCS teaching staff! This will be my 22nd year working in the PVRSD, and while I've had the good fortune of working with Elizabeth Musgrave and the WCS teachers in my role as PVRSD Elementary Curriculum Coordinator, my new role as WCS Digital Learning Coach is offering me the exciting opportunity to work and



learn with the WCS staff and students as we pursue the engaging world of digital teaching and learning.

WCS 2-6 grade students have had a great start to this year's digital learning. They have been learning how computers and services such as Google Apps for Education provide many options for users to personalize and organize their learning environment. Students were thrilled to be able to choose a new background for their desktop stations in the computer lab! In addition to customizing their desktop, students also learned how to "pin" applications to their taskbar for easy access and to clean and organize their Google Drive for the new school year.

Students in kindergarten and grade 1 have also had a great start to the school year. We have used our time together the past few weeks to learn how we use the "Listening and Learning Area" in the computer lab and also how to use a "Map" to navigate to one our our favorite early learning websites - Starfall.com.

In addition to looking forward to many engaging and challenging digital learning projects I'm planning to give special emphasis to three important areas of digital literacy. At all grade levels, students will be instructed and encouraged to use proper tech vocabulary when discussing their digital work. They will also be instructed and encouraged to develop efficient work habits such as age appropriate keyboarding and the use of keyboard shortcuts. Lastly, and most importantly, WCS teachers and I will continue to help student understand their role as a digital citizens, teaching them how to stay safe while online and to understand the implications of their Digital Footprint.

I'm looking forward to meeting all the WCS families at Open House. Please be sure to stop by the lab to say hello! **Ms. Mary Leyden, Digital Literacy Coach**



**SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S CONCERN:** A friendly reminder that, even in our small community, it is important to know who is in our school building at all times. Please sign in and wear a name badge whenever you move beyond the front foyer - even if you are a frequent visitor to our school.

This fall, PVRSD will be practicing fire drills and lock down drills in our school communities. All five schools in our district will practice lock down drills with the Franklin County Safety and Security Task Force and the town emergency departments.

Today we had our first Fire drill, overseen by Fire Chief, Ron Gates, which the children and staff performed flawlessly. Our first lock-down drill will be in

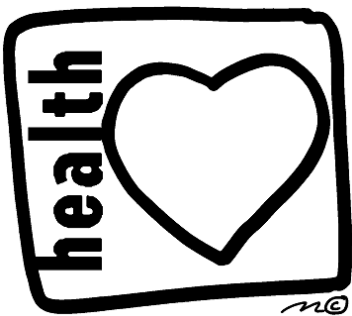
October and the task force will be present to guide us and give us constructive feedback.

Thank you to all the parents of our "walkers" who have been so cooperative and supportive of the changes to our dismissal routines. The children are doing so well with consistently watching for traffic and using the crosswalks!



**COUNSELOR'S CORNER** Hello! I am the new School Adjustment Counselor. I am thrilled to be here and it is already starting to feel like home! My first order of business has been to learn all of your children's names. The children have been so welcoming of me and I am really enjoying getting to know them. I've also had the opportunity to talk to your children in their classrooms about what it is that I do at the school. They know that I am a helper and a good person with whom to talk should they have any social, emotional, or behavioral problems or concerns with which they need help. My time is shared with Northfield Elementary, so I will be in Warwick on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I look forward to meeting all of you at Open House on October 6<sup>th</sup>. In the meantime, feel free to contact me should you have any concerns or questions.

**Ms. Beth Davis, Adjustment Counselor**



## HEALTH NOTES

**Take care of your smile!** The Fluoride Mouthrinse program will begin next week for first through sixth grade students, with parental permission. This is a program of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health in an effort to prevent tooth decay. Here are some tips to promote good oral health:

- Eat a healthy diet and limit between meal snacks
- Avoid sticky and sugary food like cookies, dried fruit, candy, and soda
- Use a soft bristled tooth brush & replace it every 3-4 months
- Use toothpaste with fluoride - use a pea sized amount
- Brush for two minutes, twice each day
- Clean between teeth daily with floss
- Visit the Dentist regularly for cleanings and oral exams - ask about dental sealants
- Wear a mouthguard during sports

Resources: *Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Office of Oral Health American Dental Association sheets at [www.mouthhealthykids.org](http://www.mouthhealthykids.org)*

**Ms. Suzanne Linden, RN**

