**Important Parent Dates**

**Parent Visitation in October**

Parents are invited to join us on Wednesday, October 19th for Parent Visitation Day. Teachers will be sending home information about visitation times for their particular classroom.

**Parent Teacher Conferences in November**

Parent Teacher Conferences are scheduled for Tues., Nov. 15th, Wed., Nov. 16th and Thurs. Nov. 17th. Kindergarten and grade 1, 2 & 3 parents were able to sign up for a conference at their Back-to-School Night. Those parents who did not attend or were unable to sign up should watch for a letter coming home about signing up. Parents of students in grades 4, 5 & 6 should also watch for a letter coming home about signing up for conferences at Brass Castle. If you have any questions you may call the main office of your child’s school.

**The District Welcomes New Staff**

Port Colden School is pleased to welcome our new first grade teacher, Mrs. Deirdre Ann Dugdale. Mrs. Dugdale is a graduate of George Mason University and Brooklyn College. She is presently continuing her graduate studies through Argosy University. Before coming to us Mrs. Dugdale taught in the Easton Area School District. She is thrilled to be in our district and has planned many wonderful hands-on and creative activities with her students!

The Brass Castle School is happy to welcome our new fifth grade teacher, Mrs. Jamie Hussey. Mrs. Hussey is a graduate of the University of Delaware. Mrs. Hussey taught in the Union Township Elementary School and the Crossroads Christian Academy. She is very excited to be joining the Brass Castle staff and looks forward to an awesome year with her terrific students!
Fire Prevention Week

Fire Prevention Weeks are from Oct. 10th to the 21st, and our students are looking forward to our annual visit from the Washington Township Fire Department. During the visit, our students will be made aware of all the safety equipment that our firemen use from their gear to their truck. Our local firefighters will also dress in full gear in order to show the students how they look and the sounds they make when they are dressed to fight a fire. In addition to fire equipment gear, the fire department will review important safety tips in fire prevention such as changing the batteries in smoke alarms twice a year, and making sure that families have a meeting place in the event of an emergency. Touring the fire truck is always the highlight of the day, we hope it is available that day. Please be sure to discuss this exciting day with your children and don’t forget to practice fire safety at home.

We Are Bucket Fillers at Port Colden!

Have You Filled A Bucket Today? by Carol McCloud is a book that explains to children that we all carry an invisible bucket where we keep our feelings about ourselves. The purpose of the bucket is to hold your good thoughts and feelings about yourself. When your bucket is full, you feel happy. When your bucket is empty, you feel sad. We can fill our own bucket and so can others. We can also dip into other students’ buckets.

‘Bucket fillers’ are those who say or do something kind, who do nice things for someone and make others feel special. ‘Bucket dippers’ say or do mean things that make others feel bad.

During Port Colden School’s Week of Respect, we will be launching our ‘Bucket Filler Program’! Students will receive tickets from staff members and bus drivers for ‘filling buckets’. These tickets will be put into a monthly raffle in which students can win small prizes. In addition to the monthly raffle, Port Colden School will select three ‘Bucket Fillers of the Week’. One student from each grade level will be honored for their positive behavior and contributions to a positive school climate at Port Colden.

Children love being bucket fillers! With encouragement from teachers, school staff, parents, grandparents, and others, our children will be life-long bucket fillers!

Summer Fun

Mrs. Watters and her fifth grade students and parents spent some quality time together over the summer. They all had a “striking” time with their first get together at Oakwood Lanes in July. Looks like a future bowling team in progress! Then they set out to “ring” in the new school year when they hiked through Ringing Rocks Park in Black Eddy, Pennsylvania in late August. If you’re ever in Brass Castle, stop by their hallway “Wall of Fame” to see some pictures of their summer adventures. They are all looking forward to more fun times outside the classroom walls.
News from Miss Nancy’s Preschool

Hard to believe it is already the end of September! The preschoolers are off to a wonderful start! We were busy this month learning about the color red, the number one, circles, the letters A, B, & C, and learning more about each other. We have begun making a very special book titled “All About Me!” We will include information about our families and friends in the upcoming month. We also introduced a Writing Journal in which the students are able to draw pictures and add any letters or words they may know to their drawings. We take time to talk about our drawings and read our stories to each other. Probably the most exciting event in our classroom is the addition of our new iPads! The students have quickly learned how to use their iPads. They are learning so many new skills while having lots of fun! We celebrated a birthday this month and enjoyed a First Day of Fall story and pumpkin cookies.

Flag Raising/Lowering at Brass Castle

As part of their day-to-day responsibilities, our 4th Grade students raise and lower the American flag. They must also fold the flag according to custom. Here we see Mr. Piccotti, Sean Murphy, Noah Fink, and Mrs. Nanius taking down the U.S. flag at Brass Castle.

Morning Arrival Procedures

Brass Castle: Morning Arrival Procedures
Please remember when dropping off your child in the morning to stay in line with the other cars and drop your child off in the zone at the end of the sidewalk directly in front of the school.

Only buses may enter the circle. Even after the buses move out, please do not enter the circle. Students are still walking down the sidewalk, and we want to provide safe passage for them as they approach the school.

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our students safe!

Port Colden: Dismissal Procedures
Our arrival procedures are working well. We would like to remind our parents, however, when picking up your children at the end of the day, please keep them close to you and away from traffic. We are asking all parents to refrain from parking on the street adjacent to our parking area. Do not allow your child to walk between any cars without your supervision. Thank you for helping us with these safety measures.
Counselor's Corner

Deb Tierney, Guidance Counselor

It was a pleasure seeing many of you at your respective Back-to-School nights! Your children have settled into their fall routines quite nicely. It has been a great start to the school year!

Nationally, there has been a great deal of energy surrounding bullying. Yes – I said it... the ‘B’ word! In New Jersey, you may be aware of legislation passed effective September 1st, 2011 known as the ‘Anti-Bullying Bill Of Rights’. This law provides schools with a clear system of support and a consistent timeline to be used when addressing potential bullying behaviors.

Please join me on Thursday evening, October 6, 2011 at 7:00 pm in the Brass Castle School library for a Parents’ Informational Session on New Jersey HIB policy - Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying. I will discuss what the law means for families with a specific focus on the application in the elementary school realm as well as provide practical tips for parents/guardians.

It is my belief that in a school environment that encourages respectful attitudes and actions, students have the tendency to be ‘less mean’ and more tolerant of each other. The general philosophy in Washington Township School District has always been to teach our youngest about the meaning of respect while continuing to reinforce this concept in age-appropriate ways over their tenure with us. Our kindergarten students will be learning about accepting the differences in others while our older students will be exposed to the dangers of cyber-bullying, learning to respect themselves and how to best secure their privacy. Respect is the cornerstone to preventing intentional bullying behavior and one that is not new to us in Washington Township.

The school-wide initiatives supporting respect that will be rolled out this month include our Port Colden Bucket Filling. This is based on the concept of building a positive environment by creating/maintaining an atmosphere of respect and kindness within the school community. By doing ‘good’, students learn that they feel good about themselves. This intrinsic motivation creates better behavior and the desire to be kind. There are many life lessons wrapped up in this simple Bucket Filling concept, including self-motivation and a healthy self-concept - do good, feel good! Learning that filling someone’s bucket does not take away from your own bucket is a great revelation for our young students and truly a wonderful life lesson! Stay tuned for bucket-filling highlights throughout the year!

Next month, I look forward to highlighting our respect program at Brass Castle School where are students are truly S.T.A.R.S. – Showing Tolerance And Respect!

Any questions, comments or suggestions? Please contact me anytime via my email dtierney@washtwpsd.org or by phone BC ext 611 and PC ext 543. Thank you!

School Events for October

Week of Respect – October 3-7: Our district will observe the Week of Respect by kicking off our Bucket Filler program at Port Colden and our S.T.A.R.S. program at Brass Castle. Please refer to our September and October newsletters for more information about these two programs.

School Safety Week – October 19-23: Character Education will be highlighted within the context of respecting oneself through classroom lessons. In addition, 4th grade students will participate in the Drug Free Poster Contest which is sponsored by Drug Free NJ in collaboration with the Governor’s Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. The purpose is to promote fun things for our students to do beside experiment with alcohol and/or drugs, including tobacco use.

Relay for Life – October 24-28: Students and staff will celebrate survivorship! As a service unit, students will raise awareness and money for research and programs for the American Cancer Society. It will be a time to honor survivors and remember lost loved ones.
Instrumental Petting Zoo

Grade 4 students and their parents attended an Instrumental Petting Zoo held in September. Mr. Lawrence, the Instrumental Music teacher, helped to determine which instrument was the perfect fit for those students who plan to take instrumental music lessons this year. If you missed one of these evening events, please contact Mr. Lawrence at alawrence@washtwpsd.org or 908-689-1188, ext. 636 to include your child in an instrumental selection process during the school day.

Grandparents' Day

In honor of National Grandparents' Day, Brass Castle Kindergarten children welcomed their proud grandparents to a memorable celebration. On Friday, September 23rd, approximately 100 grandparents enjoyed listening to their grandchildren sing, “Let's Go See Our Grandparents” to the tune of “Take Me Out to the Ball Game.” A special presentation and reading of The Ultimate Guide to Grandmas and Grandpas was viewed on a large screen. Grandparents and children created a family tree together. The day was concluded with some delicious refreshments provided by family members.

Columbus Day: Teacher In-Service Day

On October 10, 2011, teachers from Washington Township will join their colleagues from Warren County in professional development activities during the Warren County Countywide In-Service Day. Teachers will participate in a variety of professional development programs, lesson planning and curriculum development experiences that will be sponsored throughout the county.

Each year districts open their door to invite neighboring teachers to share in their workshops. This year Washington Township will be hosting six workshops for the Countywide In-Service program. Workshops include: SMART Response – Susan Peterson, World Language Collaboration – Leslie Scherrei, OnCourse Lesson Planner – Matt Shea, Innovative SMART Notebook Discoveries – Kim Sigman, iPads in the Special Education Classroom – Kim Sigman, and Articulation for Special Education Teachers of Students with Multiple Disabilities – Laura Sullivan.
One of the Many Heros of September 11th
“The John J. Harvey”

Students at Brass Castle and Port Colden Schools remembered the heroes of September 11th with special activities. On September 9th students honored the memory of those lost in the tragedy of September 11th with a moment of silence during the morning announcements. Later in the day classes read the story Fireboat: The Heroic Adventures of the John J. Harvey by Maira Kalman. The book chronicles the true story of the John J. Harvey - a retired New York City fireboat reinstated on September 11, 2001. After the September 11th attacks, with fire hydrants at Ground Zero inoperable and Hudson River’s water supply critical to fighting the blaze, the fire department called on the John J. Harvey for help.

Apples...Apples... and More Apples!

The first grade classes have been very busy this month learning about apples. The classes all stamped apples on t-shirts. The following week, the classes celebrated Grandparent’s Day. Each class listened to an apple story and read a special poem. Then each student created a patchwork apple with the help of a grandparent or special friend. Everyone had a great time! At the end of the week, the students celebrated Johnny Appleseed’s birthday by having an apple-themed day. The children brought in apples to contribute to the class’s applesauce. The types of apples were graphed and then the apples were cut up by the parents. The children also used their five senses to write about apples. At the end of the day the children enjoyed tasting the applesauce. What a great way to welcome fall!

Building Character in 3M

As part of building a Community of Character, our school district recognizes, educates and celebrates a specific character trait each month. The traits are based on the Pillars of Character. September and October’s trait to embrace is ‘RESPECT’. Mrs. Melhem’s third grade students were learning to build new friendships and respect each other’s likenesses and differences through their September get to know each other project ‘All About Me.’ Students worked as a class community to get to know each other and embrace each other’s differences. Students were asked to fill a bag with items that represented them, who they are, what their likes and,or dislikes are, but most of all things that make them special.

Students learned that good citizenship goes hand-in-hand with respect and tolerance. Students took turns sharing and explaining the contents of their bags filled with personal examples of their character’s likes and dislikes. Some students made it more fun to guess what the objects meant. Some of the items students brought in included pictures of poison ivy and family pets; sporting events ticket stubs; sea shells and postcards from favorite family vacations; pieces of personal collections; birthday party printed napkins and favorite food recipes; photos of pets and family and even video-game controllers.

What a fun way to get to know each other and share what we have in common and to learn how diverse we are! Now we know we can respect each other for who we are. ‘All About Me’ bags and their contents are proudly displayed in the Port Colden showcase. Come and get to know us!
PTA Information

KidStuff Coupon Books
Great news! As a service to our families & friends, we now have the opportunity to purchase valuable, family-friendly Warren/Morris/Essex/Union County Edition KidStuff Coupon Books for $25. If interested, please send a check made out to Washington Township PTA for $25 to Linda Lewis, via R. Lewis, grade 3T Trush c/o Port Colden School. Any ordered books will be sent home. Books will be available until October 14th. If you have any questions, contact Linda Lewis, 908-835-8502 or l.lewis16@comcast.net.

Entertainment Books - Northern New Jersey
We have Northern New Jersey Entertainment books available for purchase this year. The price per book is $30. Our PTA retains 50% profit. If you are interested in purchasing a book, for parents at Port Colden, please make out a check to Washington Township PTA for $30 and send in to Ginny Warsen, via R. Warsen, 3T Trush. Parents at Brass Castle, send the check in to Ginny Warsen, via J. Warsen, 5W Watters. Any ordered books will be sent home. If you have any questions, contact Ginny Warsen, 908-835-8231 or warsen@comcast.net.

Blue Notepads
Blue notepads are available year-round at a cost of $3 each. They are at the front desk at Brass Castle School or contact Yomi Hamilton at wtptapres61@yahoo.com to order. Exact change only, please.

Save the Date!
Washington Township PTA is excited to announce Port Colden School’s first Trunk-or-Treat at Meadowbreeze Park on Sunday, October 30, 2011. Please check your eblasts for details in the very near future!

What is a Trunk-or-Treat? It’s when several families get together, park their cars in the parking lot, open up the trunks of their cars, and kids come around to each car to Trunk-or-Treat instead of going house to house to Trick-or-Treat.

Positions Available
We will need an entirely new executive board for the 2012-2013 school year. The following positions are open: President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary.

We also have the following Chairperson vacancies immediately available: Goodwill, Be An Angel, Seasonal Events-Port Colden, and Book Fair@Brass Castle (Spring 2012).

We anticipate needing chairpersons for the 2012-2013 school year for the following committees: School Spirit-Brass Castle, Family Fun-Movie Night, Membership and Room Rep. This list may include most but not all anticipated vacancies. Please contact Yomi Hamilton at wtptapres61@yahoo.com for more information. The sooner you get involved, the more time our current chairs have to mentor you and the more confident you will feel performing the tasks.

Thank you for allowing our PTA to continue being an important part of your children’s lives as well as our community at large.

NEXT MEETING: October 19, 2011, @Brass Castle School Library, 7:00 P.M. wtptapres61@yahoo.com

WTPTA would like to thank ALL our families for your generous contributions!
2011-2012 CLUB PROGRAM

After School Sports-BC
Students will participate in a safe, fun, educational environment where they can expand their knowledge of basketball by participating in a variety of drills and games. The club will be held on Tuesdays through Thursdays from October to November. Sports Club topic for the spring session will be announced at a later date.

Art Club-BC
Students will explore art of cultures from around the world with projects that use a variety of materials. The club will be held on Tuesdays from October 11\textsuperscript{th} through December 20\textsuperscript{th}.

Best Buddies Club-BC
Students will participate in a variety of age-appropriate and fun activities with our special needs students. The club will meet on a bi-weekly basis throughout the school year.

Blue and White Band-BC
Students will rehearse elementary band repertoire with an emphasis on ensemble sound and musical goals. They will learn note reading, rhythm reading and other skills. The club will meet Tuesdays and Thursdays before school beginning in September.

Book Club-BC
The students and the advisor will pick a book, spend the month reading it and meet at the end of the month to discuss it. They will then pick another book to read over the next 4 weeks. The club will meet 8 times from November to June.

“E Pluribus Unum” Latin Club-BC
Students will learn the basics of the Latin language. The club will meet on Tuesdays beginning February 21\textsuperscript{st} through May 15\textsuperscript{th}.

French Club-BC
Students will learn to speak conversational French and learn about the French culture. The club will be held on Tuesdays from November 15\textsuperscript{th} through February 14\textsuperscript{th}.

Garden Club-BC
Students will plant bulbs and annuals in school-approved flower beds. Students will learn the names of the trees, shrubs and flowers that surround our school. Members will learn about the characteristics of weeds, root systems and the growth habits of plants. The students will maintain these plantings during fall and spring. The club, though weather dependent, will meet on Tuesdays in September, October, November, April, May & June.

Homework Club-BC
Teacher-recommended students will be provided with a safe, quiet and structured environment to allow them to get a good start on their daily homework assignments. They will receive support and assistance to complete assignments and/or study for upcoming tests and quizzes. The club will meet every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday that school is in session.
Literary Magazine Club-BC
Students will become a community of writers, expanding their writing experiences with opportunities. This club meets three Mondays a month after school.

Panther Band-BC
Students will rehearse beginning band repertoire, with an emphasis on musical goals and ensemble sound. The club will meet every Friday until the end of the school year.

Scrabble Club-BC
Students will have the opportunity to develop vocabulary, spelling and spatial skills while playing Scrabble. The students will learn tips to improve play. The club will meet on alternating Wednesdays beginning October 5th through April 18th.

Talent Show
Students will hone their natural talents culminating in a school-wide performance in March 2012.

Video Club-BC
Students will have the opportunity to participate in all phases of video production. They will write a news script, research news stories, practice public speaking and hone their broadcasting skills. The club will meet on Thursdays beginning October 20th and continue through May 24th.

Volleyball Club-BC
Students will have the opportunity to learn a variety of volleyball drills and participate in fun games. The club will meet at the Meadow Breeze volleyball outdoor court on Mondays in October and May.

Wilson Reading Club-BC
Students who benefit from extra support in reading will have the opportunity to be instructed in the Wilson Reading methodology. Teacher recommendation is required. The club will meet once a week from October through June.

Writing Club-PC
The Freedom Writer’s Club is designed to give grades 2 & 3 students the opportunity to write creatively and freely in a supportive environment. Teachers will provide mini-lessons that will help the motivated writer succeed in composition and communication of poetry and narrative genres. The club will meet after school once a week during the fourth marking period.
September 2011

Dear Parents / Guardians:

As per the United States Department of Education’s No Child Left Behind Law of 2002, school districts must notify parents of the highly qualified status of all teaching staff members. The law requires that all school receiving Title I funds must inform parents of their right to ask schools about the qualifications of their child’s teachers. Our school receives Title I funding and we are happy to share this information with you at your request.

We believe that nothing is more important to your child’s education at school then having a well-prepared and highly qualified teacher. The law requires that all teachers must meet a specific legal definition of “highly qualified” in order to teach in schools that receive Title I funding. The legal definition of a “highly qualified teacher” has three parts. It states that the teacher must have the following:

1. At least a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education;
2. Be fully licensed/certified;
3. Demonstrate content expertise.

I am pleased to once again report that all teaching staff meet the “highly qualified” standard established by the New Jersey Department of Education.

Sincerely,

Keith Neuhs
NCLB Grant Coordinator