



Washington Township Schools

"Making a Difference"



Blue Ribbons for Study Island at Home

Port Colden School
Brass Castle School

Volume 6 Issue 2

October 2013

Our school district continues to utilize a subscription to a research-based standards mastery program called Study Island. This online subscription is completely Web-based, which allows students to access the program from any computer with an Internet connection using a standard Web browser.

The program is divided into sections based on subject (Mathematics & Reading). Each section includes 15 to 30 topics, with each topic containing approximately 20 to 30 questions. Topics are accompanied by a lesson, which contains a brief overview of the material covered in that topic.

Students are strongly encouraged to use the Study Island subscription while at home. Each week, we will run reports to determine which Brass Castle and Port Colden students have completed the most at-home lessons and those scores will be tabulated by homeroom. A blue ribbon will be awarded to the homeroom that showed the greatest at-home use.

Log in to help your class earn the blue ribbon for Study Island at home!

Instructions to use the program:

- ◇ Go to www.studyisland.com
- ◇ Enter your username and password at the upper left side of the screen, and click "Submit." Students will receive a username and password from school.
- ◇ Click on a subject (math, reading, etc.).
- ◇ If this is the first time using the program, click "Pretest."
- ◇ You must complete 10 Pretest questions to unlock the rest of the content in that subject. If there is no Pretest option, or if you have already taken the Pretest, you may move on to the other content topics.
- ◇ Choose a Session Type. The default setting is Practice Mode, however students may also select Printable Worksheet or Game Model if permitted by the school.
- ◇ To pass a topic, you must meet the passing requirements, which are based on a minimum number of questions answered (usually 10) and a minimum percentage correct (around 70%). A blue ribbon icon is displayed next to all passed topics.
- ◇ Once you have completed the Pretest, you may work through the remainder of the topics in any order. You must pass all topics before taking the Post Test. Once you have passed all the topics, you must pass the Post Test to complete the subject. Ignore this step if the subject has no Post Test.

Washington Township PTA Information

Welcome back to school from the Washington Township PTA!

- ◇ The next PTA meeting is October 15th at 7:00 PM at Brass Castle School.
- ◇ Donations to the PTA are low. Please consider a donation at anytime during the school year.
- ◇ Keep your eye out for.....
 - Kid Stuff Coupon Booklets (They will be on sale from 10/1-10/15)
 - Spirit Wear Order Forms (get your holiday shopping done early)
 - Original Works (Art Fundraiser)
- ◇ Looking forward: Drew Nugent and the Midnight Society will be playing for K-6 on October 17th and 18th—Thank you, Cultural Arts! Committee

Washington Township Board of Education

The public is invited and encouraged to attend meetings of the Washington Township Board of Education. Monthly meetings are held in the Brass Castle Media Center and begin at 7:30 PM

Up-coming Meetings: Monday, October 7; Monday, November 11; Monday, December 9; and Monday, January 6

Meeting agendas are available before the meeting and can be found on the district website at www.washtwpsd.org. Meeting minutes can also be found on the district website after they have been approved by the board at the next meeting.

Board meetings typically begin with a "curriculum minute" where faculty members share innovative and successful programs with the board and public. In addition to the monthly business the board conducts, certain meetings will feature presentations on state testing results, the annual school budget and other timely topics.

The Washington Township Board of Education is made up of seven members who are elected to three-year terms by the voters of Washington Township. School elections are held along with general elections on the first Tuesday of November.

The curriculum minute for the October 7th meeting will be a special presentation by Mrs. Tierney, our guidance counselor. She will talk about Week of Respect and School Safety Week activities. We hope you can join us at a some of our meetings this year!

If you need more information regarding the Board of Education, please contact the Board Office at (908) 689-1119 ext. 605.



Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences are scheduled for Monday November 4th through Wednesday November 6th. Many 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 should watch for a letter coming home about signing up. If you have any questions you may call the main office of your child's school.

Grandparents' Day 2013



David Rhindhart & Grandma Anne Sbriscia

In honor of National Grandparents' Day, many of our students entertained very special guests!

Our kindergarten students welcomed their "grand" guests to Brass Castle School on Friday, September 27th. The day began with a song about grandparents to the tune of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game". Next, there was a special reading of a book about grandmas and grandpas projected on the "big screen". Grandparents were able to share their favorite book with their grandchildren; a project involving a poem and child's handprint followed. Refreshments and fun were

included in this very special celebration.

On Friday, September 20th, grandparents came to the Port Colden School with their favorite first grader to celebrate Grandparents' Day! Students showed their grandparents their classroom, read stories and created special crafts as keepsakes. It was a fun morning for everyone.

Each day was special and a wonderful time was had by all!



Chris & Heather Ryden with Grandma Ryden

Preschool Goes "Buggy"

During the month of September the students in Miss Nancy's Preschool Class learned about insects. They learned the body parts, what they eat, how they move, where they live and which insects are good. They performed an insect play using Popsicle stick puppets and created their own insects using a mixture of flour, salt and water. When the insects were dry, the students decided what color they wanted to paint them, and if they wanted to add spots. They were very excited to take their insects home to share with their families.

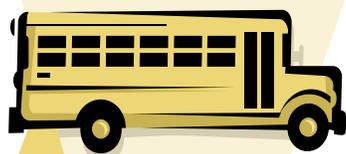


Seated: Ryan McMurray & Kyle Conya; Standing: Gabe Dubenezic, Chenzo Bucca & Aaron Ayers

Fire Prevention Week

Fire Prevention Week is from Oct. 7th to 11th, and the students at Port Colden are looking forward to our annual visit from the Washington Township Fire Department. Each year we partner with the fire department to review important safety tips in fire prevention. Students are reminded to change the batteries in their smoke alarms twice a year, and to make sure that they plan a family meeting place in the event of an emergency. Local firefighters also dress in full gear in order to show the students how they look and the sounds they make when they are dressed to battle a fire. We don't want our little ones to ever be afraid of firemen during a real emergency. Students are also made aware of all the safety equipment that our firemen use from their gear to their truck. Touring the truck is always a highlight of the day. Please be sure to discuss this exciting day with your children and don't forget to practice fire safety at home.

School Bus Evacuation Drills



School Bus evacuations are held twice a year to ensure that students are prepared in case of an emergency while riding on their school bus. Our fall drill was held on Tuesday, October 1st. The drills were held during morning arrival.

The drill consisted of teaching the children to exit the rear bus door properly. Students were reminded that they needed to remain quiet in order to hear the driver's instructions. Older children, that typically sit in the rear of the bus, were instructed how to open the rear emergency door and how to assist the other children off the bus. Students were to file out the rear door in single file by rows. Exiting students were told to sit down in the rear exit doorway and then slide off the floor of the bus to the ground. Two students were stationed on the ground at the emergency door along with a staff member to ensure that children safely exited the bus. As the students exited the bus they were told to move away from the bus and line up for further instructions.

Students were not permitted to take any of their belongings with them during the evacuation. After the drill was over, the children were loaded back onto the bus to collect their belongings and proceed into the school.



Brass Castle Supports the Military



Mrs. Watters' 2012-2013 Class



Colonial Kenneth Adgie & Medical Tech Jordan Walker

American Flag Flies from Afghanistan to Brass Castle

To observe the 12th anniversary of September 11, Mrs. Watters and her fourth grade (now 5th grade) students, dedicated an American Flag to the Brass Castle Elementary School. The Flag, flown over a United States Army Base in Afghanistan, was gifted to Mrs. Watters and her 2012-2013 fourth grade class.

Last May, students in the class created a banner to recognize the American Flag and our military. Then, with the help of student Emily Kovacsy, and her mother Melissa, the banner was sent to soldiers in the Army's 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan.

After receiving the banner, The Division sent the class a heartfelt thank you via video message. Colonial Kenneth Adgie encourages all students, "Study hard and dream big; you can be anything you want."



Banner arrived safely in Kandahar City.



Foreground: Emily Kovacsy, Kelly Banfield, Background: Melissa Kovacsy, BOE President Karen Graf & Supt. Roger Jinks



First Grade is Apple-icious

First graders welcomed fall by creating apple shirts. Then on September 27th all classes celebrated Apple Day with many stories, activities, and treats made by the students. It was a fun and tasty day!



Summer Reading Motivational Program



If you listened closely this summer, you may have heard the sound of turning pages mixed in with the usual sounds of summer. About 110 students in Brass Castle and Port Colden participated in the "Ice Cream for Books" summer reading program. The students read books from the recommended list and completed a project for that book. (One student at Port Colden completed **32** projects!) All projects earned the students a Principal's Credit that were redeemed for prizes chosen by each school's principal. Students at Brass Castle were also able to turn their credits into ARP points for use at the school store. Those who participated had a lot of fun and enjoyed many great books.

Teachers Visit Allie's Cupcakery & Café



Proud Owners: Jacob Valverde, Hernan Valverde, Jessica Pistilli & Jaime Pistilli-Suarez

Allie's Cupcake Shop and Cafe in Washington had its grand opening on Friday, Sept. 13th and a big yellow school bus delivered some very excited customers.

Staff from Brass Castle and Port Colden Schools took a Friday afternoon trip to partake of the delicious cakes, cupcakes and gelato offered by the shop. The interior of the shop was adorable, and the sweets were out of this world.

Everyone left with a smile on their face. As the staff got back on the bus, talk was heard of returning to try the shop's lunch menu, followed by dessert, of course. The entire WTSD community wishes Allie's Cupcake Shop and Cafe the best of luck and success in their new business. Could it become a Friday tradition?



Staff members load the bus!

2013—2014 Club Program

After School Fall 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 January. Grade 4 meets on Tuesday; grade 5 on Wednesday; and grade 6 on Thursday.

After School Spring Sports-BC — Co-ed 4th grade students will participate in a safe, fun, educational environment where they can expand their knowledge of various sports. Students will meet every Wednesday during the spring to cover a variety of sports and games.

Blue and White Band-BC — Students will rehearse and perform elementary band repertoire with an emphasis on ensemble sound and musicianship. Students 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 7 times from November to June.

"E Pluribus Unum" Latin Club-BC — 5th and 6th grade students will be taught useful Latin expressions as well as the history and culture of the Roman Empire. The club will meet on Tuesdays beginning February through May.

French Club-BC — Students will learn to speak conversational French and learn about the French culture. The club will be held on Tuesdays starting January and ending in February.

Garden Club-BC — Students will plant bulbs and annuals in school flowerbeds. 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 the spring. In the event of inclement weather, videos and discussions about plants and gardening will be featured. The club will be held on Tuesdays starting Oct. 1st.

Helping Hands Club -BC — Students will participate in and help organize various volunteer activities throughout their school and community. Students will learn leadership skills and the importance of giving back to the community. The club will meet on Mondays beginning October 21 through December 9 from 3:30pm-4:30pm.

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 Monday, Wednesday and Thursday that school is in session.

Panther Band-BC — Students will rehearse beginning band repertoire, with an emphasis on musical goals and ensemble sound. The club will meet Fridays before school beginning in October.

2013—2014 Club Program (cont.)

Running Club - Boys — Students will participate in a safe, fun, educational environment where they can expand their knowledge of running and fitness. Grade 5 and 6 boys will be meeting after school to participate in a running club. The boys will be preparing for a 5k and following a program known as "Couch to 5K". Club will meet on Tuesday and Thursday from March through May.

Running Club - Girls — Grade 5 and 6 students will participate in a fun after-school club for girls who are interested in preparing for a 5K all girls' race. Any ability can join; your competition is yourself. Try to improve your own running ability. Our goal is for all club participants to finish the race. Club will meet from March through May; days of the week to be determined.

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 Wednesdays beginning December 5th until February 27th.

Study Skills Club-BC — New to the Brass Castle clubs/activities this year is our Study Skills group. Developed for students who struggle with organization, how to properly prepare for class assignments, and how to best answer questions for assessment. Participation in this club is based on teacher recommendations. Students will learn a variety of study skills, which will include: Goal setting, organization of papers and time, develop strategies to ask questions, note taking skills, and how to study tips. The Study Skills Club will meet on Thursday mornings from Oct. to April.

Talent Show — Students will have an opportunity to tryout for the Talent Show in January 2014. Selected acts will perform their talent in a school-wide performance in March 2014.

Video Club-BC — Students in grade 6 will have the opportunity to participate in all phases of video production. They will write a news script, research news stories, produce, direct and provide the talent for a news-style broadcast for the school. The club will meet on Thursdays beginning October 17 and continue through March 27.

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 sand courts or in the gym if raining in the spring.

Welcome to our New Staff Member!

Brass Castle School is happy to introduce our new fourth grade teacher, Mrs. Anissa Mikitiuk. Mrs. Mikitiuk attended Bloomsburg University where she completed her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. Mrs. Mikitiuk taught earlier in her career and is entering back into the teaching arena after spending several years home with her family. She is very excited to be on the Brass Castle staff and is thrilled to be teaching fourth grade, her absolute favorite grade! Besides teaching, Mrs. Mikitiuk enjoys outdoor activities and spending time with her family, which consists of two daughters, two dogs, two guinea pigs and her husband. Welcome to Mrs. Mikitiuk!



Counselor's Corner — October 2013

The crisp fall air is such a welcome respite to the heat and humidity of early September. The weather for the next few days looks magnificent for our sixth graders who are off to Stokes for their camping trip. When I saw the students off on Wednesday morning, they were excited, energetic and happy. We should all be proud of their positive attitudes regarding their assigned 'cabin-mates' and for many, this is a milestone - their first official trip away from home. Thank you parents for trusting us to take care of your children and more importantly allowing your young ones the opportunity to spread their wings...

Each fall brings a plethora of activity in our schools. The first full week in October is designated by the State of NJ as the "Week of Respect." Though positive character is taught and reinforced all year, this week focuses on several specific initiatives. Port Colden School will once again embrace the well-loved and effective "Bucketfiller" Program." This concept is based on building a positive school environment by rewarding kindness and respect to others. The students begin to feel good about doing good and so they do good... a cycle that becomes a wonderful habit. Our 3rd graders are very familiar with this program and have been so excited for the official kick-off during the 'Week of Respect.' I have even had several students approach me with their ideas regarding the program. My plan is to include these creative minds in our "Bucketfilling" assemblies over the course of the year... Stay Tuned!

At Brass Castle, our older students will continue to strive for a S.T.A.R. nomination - for students who Show Tolerance And Respect. A STAR is earned when a student or staff member shows good character without being asked - maybe this means walking a young student down the hall, holding a door open, using manners with a bus driver or teacher or just being a kind person. The goal of this program is to encourage students to 'do good' when they think no one is watching... and isn't that what positive character is all about?

In our September Character Education classes, the focus has begun with our elementary students. The book *Chrysanthemum* is one of my favorites. Each student was given a pink heart, which said "Before you speak, think and be smart, it's hard to fix a wrinkled heart." Anytime, the character Chrysanthemum was teased, taunted or spoken to unkindly, students would fold their paper hearts; but when Chrysanthemum was feeling good about herself and being treated kindly, the heart would be unfolded. The moral of the story was that no matter how many times "I'm sorry" was spoken, no matter how many times the paper hearts were unfolded - there would ALWAYS be a wrinkle left behind. This sets the groundwork for future lessons that remind us all that our words are POWERFUL! Choose to be kind!

I have so many wonderful stories to share with you of 'our' children, but I fear my space in the newsletter is used up... I thank you for sharing your amazing children with me. Please know that I appreciate every one of them. Call or email me anytime with questions, concerns or good news at dtierney@washtwpsd.org or 908-689-1188 Ext 611 or 908-689-0681 ext 543. Happy Fall!

Washington Township School District
Port Colden School / Brass Castle School
2013-14 Special Events

SEPTEMBER

11th - Patriot's Day: Port Colden classroom teachers will read Fireboat by Maira Kalman utilizing the SMARTboard and a digital copy of the book. The book tells the inspiring story of a retired fireboat that was called upon to help on September 11, 2001. Brass Castle: Students will gather for a morning assembly for the presentation of flag that flew in Afghanistan from the 1st Brigade Military Team. All grade levels will follow up with an "I Will" district-wide activity to perform good deeds in observance of 9/11 as well as acknowledge local first responders.

Kindergarten/1st grade: "I will..." slips

2nd grade: Recognize personal heroes and "I will..." slips

3rd grade: Class letters to local firefighters

4th grade: Student letters to local medic and ambulance corps

5th grade: Student letters to local police officers

6th grade: Student letters to local ambulance, firefighter and police departments

10th (Brass Castle) and **11th** (Port Colden) - Back to School Night: Public Library will join us those evenings to display research and study resources for students.

13th- Commodore Barry Day: History of the holiday will be highlighted in each classroom and through morning announcements. Online instructional materials are available to teachers from the district website.

17th - Brass Castle Grade 6 Back to School Night: Introduction to new Physical Education Archery Program and Stokes Environmental Trip Assembly included in the evening schedule.

20th (1st grade) and **27th** (Kindergarten) - Grandparents' Day: Grade level celebration for grandparents.

OCTOBER

Week of the 6th -Week of Respect

Week of the 21st - School Safety Week: Port Colden will kick-off with a "Bucket Filler" assembly followed up with a poster contest activity. Brass Castle will kick-off with a "STAR" assembly followed by a bus behavior student campaign.

16th - Parent Visitation: Parents are invited to visit their child's classroom this day. Invitations will be sent home by each teacher with RSVP's attached.

31st - Halloween: Students may wear costumes that are school-friendly and allow free movement on the bus as well as during the school day. Preschool and kindergarten students will parade their costumes to the Brass Castle student body. Classrooms will have afternoon parties organized by their PTA room parent.

NOVEMBER

11th - Veteran's Day Celebration: Brass Castle will host a morning flag ceremony on the front lawn followed by a reception in the all-purpose room. Veterans from the Camden NJ Battleship will present a poster from the battleship for display in the Brass Castle School. A Wall of Honor will be displayed at the reception for family viewing. Grade 6 students will read their Patriot's Pen essays. Port Colden will host an afternoon flag ceremony followed by a reception. Both schools will present the Wall of Honor for members of our school families who are currently serving in the military.

26-27th - Thanksgiving: History of the holiday will be highlighted in each classrooms' activities. Our kindergarten students will present their annual Thanksgiving Festival for their family members on Nov. 26th. Kindergarten students will host a Thanksgiving Feast for their families.

DECEMBER

Date: TBA—Port Colden Winter Concert: Students from grades 1-3 will present an evening winter concert at Warren Hills High School auditorium.

20th - Winter Parties: Students will have classroom parties organized by their PTA room mothers with the annual book exchange.

JANUARY

20th - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day celebrations continue throughout this week with classroom activities. Grade 6 students will read their essays from the Warren County Human Relations Commission .

12th Annual Celebration of Diversity. Grade 6 will present a play in honor of the 50th year anniversary of **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**.

22nd - Brass Castle Winter Concert in the All-Purpose Room

FEBRUARY

1st-28th - Black History Month: Activities include morning announcement and school-wide bulletin boards that highlight important historical African American citizens. Brass Castle will host trivia bulletin boards and Port Colden interactive bulletin boards.

14th - Valentine's Day: Classrooms will have afternoon parties organized by their PTA room parent.

MARCH

3rd - Read Across America is celebrated this day in both schools: Activities include a visit from the Cat in the Hat along with guest readers. District-wide Drop Everything and Read (D.E.A.R.) will take place on this day.

3rd - 7th - National Nutrition Week: Healthy nutritional fun facts are highlighted each morning on the announcements. Our food service, Maschio's, has a week full of exciting food choices to encourage making healthy food choices.

1st-28th - Woman's History Month: Activities include morning announcement and interactive school-wide bulletin boards that highlight historically important women. Port Colden will use *Animoto* videos created by students to share pertinent information on famous women.

APRIL

22nd - Earth Day: Student celebrate our big, beautiful earth through activities that include recycling, receiving tree saplings to plant, and many more. Grade 6 will integrate their service project into the activities for the day.

25th - Arbor Day: Classroom activities continue with an environmental theme from Earth Day that in-

MAY

1st - Brass Castle Spring Concert at Warren Hills High School

1st - 7th—National Physical Education and Sports Week: Both schools will participate in school-wide run/walk-a-thons.

21st - Memorial Day Events: At Port Colden veterans are invited to classrooms to read books with patriotic themes. At Brass Castle students learn the history of Memorial Day by attending a class play performed by Mrs. Peterson/Mrs. Pare's 5th grade class. Local veterans are invited to the play as well.

JUNE

14th - Flag Day: Each school will coordinate classroom activities that celebrate the American Flag.

Parent Visitation Day—Wednesday, October 16, 2013

The Washington Township School District will be hosting a parent visitation day this year on Wednesday, October 16, 2013. We invite parents/guardians to visit their children's classrooms. We will be sending home an invitation with two times listed. Please check your schedules and indicate the session you plan on attending by returning the bottom portion of the invitation to your child's teacher.

In order to have the least amount of disruptions to our classes, we ask you to adhere to the following necessary requests:

- For security reasons you must check in at the main offices before proceeding to your child's class;
- Quietly enter the room without speaking to the teachers, pupils or other visitors;
- Limit your stay to the time indicated on the invitation during Session A or Session B;
- Siblings may **not** accompany you in the classroom. Please make childcare arrangements;
- Please turn off cell phone or place on vibrate while in the classroom; and
- Please be on time as visitation times will start as scheduled.

We hope you will be able to attend one of the sessions to see your child in his/her classroom environment. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact your child's teacher or your child's building principal.

October 2013— RESPECT

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	"To be united is a great thing, but to respect the right to be different is even greater." Bono	1 Always be yourself - this shows others you respect YOU	2 Its been said before - but SMILE - this show you have a positive attitude! have a great day!	3 Honesty will always be respected = tell the truth	4 You are accountable for your own actions - Make positive choices	
6	7 Celebrate the WEEK OF RESPECT!	8 Respect - Give it to Get it!	9 Doing the best you can shows Respect for YOU!	10 Remember - Respect must be earned	11 Respect your bus driver- follow your bus rules (early day)	12
13	14 Do something nice without being asked to-day while you are home	15 Set a good example for younger students - Be Respectful	16 Make the effort to speak with someone you do not know very well	17 Think about one character trait that your friends respect about you	18 Respect is catching - Show respect and others will follow	19
20	21 Be proud of yourself - share your talents with your friends	22 You can not 'talk' others into respecting you - you must live it!	23 Even when you do not agree with your friend - you must Respect them	24 Doing the best you can shows everyone your positive character	25 Be considerate of each others differences	26
27	28 A reminder - Treat others the way you want to be treated	29 LISTENING is the greatest form of Respect	30 A positive attitude helps others respect you more	31 Happy Halloween! When trick-or-treating, remember to use your manners		

"A friend drops their plans when you're in trouble, shares joy in your accomplishments, feels sad when you're in pain. A friend encourages your dreams and offers advice--but when you don't follow it, *they still respect and love you.*" anonymous