



# Washington Township Schools "Making a Difference"

## Study Island Home Study Program Continues

Due to the overwhelming success of our Study Island Homeroom Award Program initiated last school year, we have decided to continue the program again this year for our Kindergarten through Grade 6 students. Study Island is completely web-based, which allows students to access the program from any computer with an Internet connection using a web browser.

Study Island lessons are based on the Common Core Curriculum Standards in both Mathematics and Reading. The program is divided into sections based on subject. Each section is made up of 15 to 30 topics, with each topic containing about 20 to 30 questions. Topics are accompanied by a lesson, which contains a brief overview of the material covered in that topic.

Students in Kindergarten through Grade 6 are encouraged to go to [www.studyisland.com](http://www.studyisland.com), select a subject area, take the pre-test, and work on the various activities available. Parents will be provided with subscription packets at Back to School Night which will include login information for Study Island.

If you need assistance with the Study Island program, please email Mrs. Sigman at [ksigman@washtwpsd.org](mailto:ksigman@washtwpsd.org)

Port Colden School  
Brass Castle School

Volume 6, Issue 1

September 2013



## Arrival Times

Arrival time at Brass Castle School is 8:30am and 8:45am at the Port Colden School. It is important for students who walk or are driven to school to report to school no earlier than those times as staff members are not available for early supervision. We appreciate your cooperation in advance.



## Child Find Outreach

Every school district is charged with reaching out to children in the community who may need any kind of assistance academically, socially or emotionally. If there is someone who feels that they have, or know of a child or a family who may need some kind of assistance through the school, please contact Mrs. Kaluzny in our Special Services Office at 908-689-1188 x610.

## Website Address & Email Addresses

Our website address is [www.washtwpsd.org](http://www.washtwpsd.org)

Email Addresses: as a general rule, use the first initial of a staff member's first name then their entire last name followed by: @washtwpsd.org. For example - Mrs. Kim Sigman, our technology coordinator's email address is [ksigman@washtwpsd.org](mailto:ksigman@washtwpsd.org).

## Back-to-School Nights

Back-to-School Nights are being held on Tuesday, September 10<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, September 11<sup>th</sup> with a special Grade 6 Back-to-School/Stokes Trip Informational Night held on Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>.

Parent/guardians are reminded that Back-To-School Night is an opportunity for your child's classroom teacher to share and provide information about their instructional program. If you should have specific questions regarding your child, please schedule a conference with the teacher for another time.

Research clearly demonstrates parental involvement positively affects student achievement. Academic achievement and standardized test results are higher, students have a more positive attitude toward school and their behavior is better. Among the ways for parents to be involved in education is to communicate regularly with teachers and support their children with learning activities at home. It is our hope to establish a positive partnership with parents and teachers to provide a successful educational experience for our students.

- ⇒ Mrs. Pare's Prekindergarten - Tuesday, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> 6:45pm Brass Castle All-Purpose Room
- ⇒ Mrs. Mason's Preschool - Tuesday, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> 6:45pm Brass Castle All-Purpose Room
- ⇒ Mrs. Cambria's Kindergarten - Tuesday, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> 7:15pm Brass Castle All-Purpose Room
- ⇒ Miss Renner's Kindergarten - Tuesday, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> 6:45pm Brass Castle All-Purpose Room
- ⇒ Grade 1 - Wednesday, Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> 7:15pm Port Colden All-Purpose Room
- ⇒ Grade 2 - Wednesday, Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> 6:15pm Port Colden All-Purpose Room
- ⇒ Grade 3 - Wednesday, Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> 6:45pm Port Colden All-Purpose Room
- ⇒ Grade 4 - Tuesday, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> 6:45pm Brass Castle All-Purpose Room
- ⇒ Grade 5 - Tuesday, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> 7:15pm Brass Castle All-Purpose Room
- ⇒ Grade 6 - Tuesday, Sept. 17<sup>th</sup> 7pm Brass Castle All-Purpose Room

**Individuals:** Brass Castle School Tues., Sept. 10th: Ashley Colnett (Nurse), Marilyn Balzer (Special Education), Elizabeth Burkat (Basic Skills), Laura Dahmer (General Music), Elaine Giaimo (CST Learning Disability Teacher Consultant), Katie Giuliano (Art), Lynn Hardcastle, (CST Social Worker), John Hornyak (Health & Physical Education); Heidi Kaiven (Library Media), Suzanne Lee (Special Education), Nick Rizzo (Instrumental Music), Laura Sullivan (Special Education); Deb Tierney (Guidance).

**Individuals:** Port Colden School - Wednesday, Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> Session 1 (6:15pm): Sarah Baratta (Special Education), Janine Barzdines (Nurse), Rob Borusovic (Health & Physical Education), Rebecca Grochowicz (Basic Skills), Erika Hill (Behaviorist), Jesse Kyle (Speech), Alisa Ludwig (Speech), Sue Maurer (Special Education), Jenn McKenna (School Psychologist), Ruth O'Conne (Project Read), Leslie Scherrei (Spanish), Jill Stocker (BSI), Deb Tierney (Guidance); and Session 2 (6:45pm): Heather Meyerhofer (Special Education), Donna Parenti (Enrichment) & (Study Skills)

**Individuals:** Brass Castle School - Tuesday, Sept. 17th: Ashley Colnett (Nurse) & Kristen Cappitelli (Special Education)

## Cell Phone Reminder

Children may, with parent/guardian's permission, bring their cell phone to school. Pupils may not, however, have the cellular phone activated when on school property, while on the school bus or while attending a school function such as a concert, play and/or dance. While on school property all cell phones must be safely stored in their backpack in their homeroom. Parents may, in an emergency, contact their child through the school's main office. Students may also, under extenuating circumstances, ask their teacher for permission to go to the office to call their parent(s).

## \*Picture Day\*

### Port Colden School

Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup> (Make up day: November 14th)

### Brass Castle School

Friday, September 20<sup>th</sup> (Make-day: November 19th)

## Child Care Program

We continue to offer a parent-paid child care program for the parents of our students who work. Margaret Lyons, our Child Care Director, would like to extend a warm welcome to all of the new families and to also let them know that they are welcome to come visit our child care program in order to become familiar with its offerings. It is important that parents of children in grades Kindergarten (pm) through 3 register their children for our afternoon Child Care Program so their children can go to our child care program in an emergency. To learn more about our program, or make an appointment with Mrs. Lyons, please call 908-413-7046. Mrs. Lyons is very excited about the new school year and will continue to make subtle changes to enhance its operation.



## Highly Qualified Notification

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 schools receiving Title 1 funds must inform parents of their right to ask schools about the qualifications of their child's teachers. Our school receives Title 1 funding and we are happy to share this information with you.

We believe that nothing is more important to your child's education at school than 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 and that definition has three parts:

1. at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education;
2. that the teacher be fully licensed and certified; and
3. that they demonstrate expertise in their field.

We are pleased to report once again that all teaching staff members meet the "highly qualified" standard established by the New Jersey Department of Education.

*Mr. Keith Neuhs, NCLB/Title 1 Grant Coordinator*

# Ode to the Parents/Guardians of our Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Students The Classes of 2025, 2026 and 2027

*I wonder what you're doing right now,  
And if everyone is treating you kind.  
I hope there is a special person,  
A nice friend that you can find.*

*I wonder if the teacher knows  
Just how special you are to me.  
And if the brightness of your heart  
Is something she can see.*

*I wonder if you are thinking about me,  
And if you need a hug.  
I already miss the sound of your voice  
And how you give my leg a tug.*

*I wonder if you could possibly understand  
How hard it is for me to let you grow.  
On this day know that my heart breaks,  
For this is the first step in letting my baby go.*

*~Anonymous*

*Please know that our teachers and staff will treat your child with respect and with most caring hands, especially in these first few days of school. In addition to our little ones, know that our new students, and yes, all our returning students, will be welcomed into school as a safe and happy place to learn and thrive.*



## Please label, label & then label again - all student personal belongings!

Wanted: Owner of a \$75 Lands' End coat; Owner of a L.L. Bean Flip Top Lunch tote valued at \$29; Owner of an \$28 Columbia boy's wool hat.... Yes, we have had these articles and many more in our Lost and Found waiting for the rightful owner to claim them. But we can guarantee the quick return of your child's personal belongings if labeled. All of the articles in our Lost & Found have one thing in common - no name labels! If the jacket, lunch tote, or wool hat had been labeled, those items would have never made their way to our Lost & Found - with your child's name and homeroom clearly noted the item would have simply been returned to your child! Please label your child's personal belongings with their name and homeroom.

## Birthday Invitations / Treats

Parents are reminded that invitations to home birthday parties may be distributed in school, but they need to be distributed as follows with no exceptions: the entire class, all boys or all girls. Parents should also present the birthday invitations to the teachers for distribution.



If you would like to have your child celebrate his/her birthday in school by having a small treat for their classmates, please check with the classroom teacher a minimum of 2 days prior regarding any allergy/dietary concerns there may be in the classroom. The treat needs to be dropped off in the main office in the morning. Parents are reminded that all treats should be easily distributed, such as a cupcake or cookie. Teachers are not permitted to cut up "sheet cakes" nor will they distribute frozen treats, such as ice cream. We do not have the refrigeration space required to store them. And finally, please do not send in "birthday-bag treats" for your child's classmates; it is gracious of a parent to do that, but we must remember all families do not have the resources to provide each child with such a gift.

## PTA Invitation

Our PTA cordially invites all parents and guardians to their first PTA meeting of the new school year. The meeting will be held at the Brass Castle School on Tuesday, September 24<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. The PTA needs your support in order to continue to sponsor many very popular activities in our schools. Programs sponsored by our PTA include the Family Arts Night, Student Field Days, Book Fairs, Plant Sales, Spelling Bee, school yearbook and our popular classroom holiday parties; just to name a few. Please join President Chase Haffner, Vice President Cathleen Kicak, Secretary Tiffani Higgins and Treasurer Jennifer Monahan on the 24<sup>th</sup>!



## Grade 6 Stokes Environmental Program

Students in grade 6 will travel to Stokes State Forest on Wednesday, September 25<sup>th</sup> through Friday, September 27<sup>th</sup> for their annual 3-day field experience. Water ecology, forestry, orienteering, hiking, first aid and raptors are among the subjects explored by our sixth graders in this outdoor classroom setting. The culminating project is a journal that highlights our students' writing and publishing skills as well as a DVD that memorializes the entire events kindness of Mr. Flumerfelt.

# School Fire / Emergency Drills

General Assembly Bill 3002, enacted on January 11, 2010, requires districts to hold 1 fire drill and 1 emergency drill per month. Emergency drills must include the following: lockdown, bomb treat, evacuation (non-fire) and active shooter. As in the past, we will continue to have the police and other first-responders visit our schools during these drills to observe and provide feedback. The purpose of this legislation is to practice these emergency drills so that schools are prepared to respond to these types of emergencies. It is important that parents understand the guidelines which we must adhere to regarding these drills.

When these emergency drills are being held we will no longer announce them as drills. The Warren County Prosecutor's Office issued guidance regarding the language used when drills are practiced. We are to simply announce, in clear talk, "Lockdown - the school is now in lockdown". It is their view that every drill should be "conducted as close to the actual situation as possible". Therefore, we will no longer announce a "lockdown drill" but simply say, "Lockdown - the school is now in lockdown."

Chief McDonald issued a memo to our parents last spring clarifying the difference between a "Shelter in Place" and a "Lockdown" and directives about how information about an emergency is to be disseminated. The information below summarizes Chief McDonald's memo.

Shelter in Place: "A shelter in place can be initiated for anything from a bear sighting in the area to a police pursuit that may enter a school zone. During a shelter in place, classes may resume as normal, but no one is to enter or leave the building. There could, however, be circumstances, when access and egress could be allowed on limited basis, provided law enforcement and school administrators agree that it would not pose a danger to staff, students or visitors."

Lockdown: "A lockdown is initiated when there is a potential danger within the school and students and staff are to secure themselves in a secure area." During a lockdown no one is permitted to leave or enter the building.

Parent Notification: Chief McDonald also discussed a parents' interest in coming to school during an emergency event. He recommends that parents not report to the school because their appearance "could actually endanger your child and hinder the law enforcement response." He went on to say that "these situations can be very fluid and information early on can be sketchy." He closes by saying the police will "release accurate information as soon as is practical to both school administrators and the public."

With regard to the notification of our parents, we will not notify parents that drills have occurred. We will, however, notify parents about actual events, once directed by the police department to do so.

## Curriculum Connection: 7 Reading Tips for Parents

Anne Schwartzberg believes that even if your child is motivated to read, supporting him/her with a variety of ways and options will keep his/her momentum going. She offers 7 tips to open up the wonderful world of reading for your child.

### **Reading Tip for Parents: What's "Just Right"?**

Children feel confident and competent when they read books that are "just right." But how do you find a "just right" book? Have your child read the back and front cover, and first page of the book. If there are more than five words that he cannot pronounce or understand in context, the book may be too challenging. Be supportive about finding a more perfect fit. Choosing the right book will help your little reader feel successful.

### **Reading Tip for Parents: Map it Out**

It's important to provide your child with a variety of fiction and non-fiction reading. A fun way to do this is to get a map and show them the way from your house to the grocery store or another familiar destination. Have your child write out the directions, street by street, and then read them to you as you walk or drive to the store - like a living GPS!

### **Reading Tip for Parents: Card Tricks**

Do you think effective reading only takes place at libraries and book stores? Think again! There are reading opportunities everywhere. Go to a greeting card store with your child and read the greeting cards together. Later, vote for the ones whose words convey the best birthday wish or get-well sentiment.

### **Reading Tip for Parents: Picture This!**

During your next outing or gathering, take action-packed photos, then have your child create captions to go with each picture. Assemble the pictures and captions in a picture book or album, and add speech and thought bubbles to create a personalized - and probably hysterical -- graphic novel.

### **Reading Tip for Parents: Last Comic Standing**

Take time to read comic strips together. Share favorites from your own childhood and have your child put his favorites on the fridge. Read them aloud, and often -- repetition is a great way to build reading skills. Soon, he'll love looking forward to the "Sunday funnies" each week.

### **Reading Tip for Parents: Become a Fan**

Your child will soon develop a love for particular authors and illustrators. Nurture his/her fan-ship by helping them write a letter to their favorite author. Many authors have their own websites with contact information, but here's a great place to start your search (<http://www.scholastic.com/kids/stacks/authors/all.htm>). You can also contact the book's publisher, the mailing address for which can often be found on the back of the title page or on the publisher's Web site.

### **Reading Tip for Parents: Labels of Love**

Word recognition and vocabulary are important parts of reading. On a rainy day, get some paper and tape and start labeling everything in your home -- from furniture to small knick-knacks. Reading these labels repeatedly will build your child's mental word bank. If your family is bilingual, create labels in both languages.

## Counselor's Corner — September 2013

What an energetic bunch of students greeted me this week! Your children look well rested and are eager to begin their school adventure this year! I hope you had an enjoyable summer and are getting your mind around the fall routines. This is always a project for me as I color code our family calendar and try to balance chores, work, activities and down time... and really that is what we all strive for each day - a bit of balance. Though it is important for our kids to be involved with outside activities, (I am an advocate of opening up the world to our children however we can) it is also important that we leave some time for them to just 'be.'

Last week, my family dropped our first born off at college. He is doing fabulously and is soaking up everything around him. In some ways he is like a 'kid in a candy store.' Every club, event, class and activity is fascinating and he wants to do it all. For the first time, however, he is completely in charge of his 'balance.' I know he has the tools to manage his academics, athletics and social activities and I can hope that he remembers to take the time to just 'be' and absorb the experience of independence.

On that note - Welcome Back! Once again we will be celebrating positive character through our 'Community of Character' programming in both Port Colden and Brass Castle Schools. Each month we will recognize, educate and celebrate a specific character trait. These traits are reinforced through our monthly Character Calendar. Try using the daily notes as a starting point for a quick conversation with your child. This is a great way to reinforce values and positive character at home. In school, our character education lessons will begin with RESPECT - for self, others, property, our community. "Respect for ourselves guides our morals. Respect for others guides our manners (L. Sterne.)" Respect is the foundation for our character.

The beginning of school is also the time to remind our students about proper and appropriate behavior in the classrooms, at recess, in the hallways, in the bathrooms and on the bus. There will be a great deal of focus on bus behavior in the next few weeks. Parents and Guardians will be asked to review bus conduct with their student and sign and return an acknowledgement that you spoke with them in this regard. Be on the look- out for this beginning in the next couple of weeks. Thank you for helping make our students bus ride to and from school both safe and quiet (ok -maybe not quiet!) Even if your student does not take the bus on a regular basis, this is a valuable review of respectful public conduct.

I am looking forward to a wonderful year where our children excel academically, stretch their minds, make new friends, experiment with new activities, practice respect without being reminded and feel good about their path in life. I am here to support you and your child on this journey. Please contact me any time at [dtierney@washtwpsd.org](mailto:dtierney@washtwpsd.org) or by phone Monday-Friday. Thank you for sharing your wonderful children with me! Here's to a positive, productive school year!

# SEPTEMBER 2013 - RESPECT

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Labor Day	3 Teacher In Service	4 WELCOME BACK! Share a smile with everyone today	5 Remember the GOLDEN RULE-respect yourself, your friends and your teachers	6 Start the school year with a positive attitude	7
8	9 Respect yourself - learn something new today	10 Be a role model for someone younger than you	11 Use your Respectful behavior on the school bus	12 Respect your family - do something nice (and unexpected)	13 Be a respectful listener - let others speak	14
15	16 Do your best - your teachers and friends will respect you for your efforts	17 Even little gestures matter - hold the door open for someone today	18 Respect comes in many forms - Thank the cafeteria workers for making you a yummy lunch	19 Smile at someone you don't usually talk to	20 Respect is catching- respect yourself and others will follow	21
22	23 Making eye contact when someone is speaking shows respect	24 Surprise your teacher - thank them for all they do for you!	25 Show respect for our environment - recycle!	26 Are you remembering your bus manners?	27 We all make mistakes - show respect through forgiveness	28
29	30 Be respectful of our differences					

'RESPECT FOR OURSELVES GUIDES OUR MORALS, RESPECT FOR OTHERS  
GUIDES OUR MANNERS.' L. STERNE



**Welcome Back!**