



Washington Township Schools

"Making a Difference"

Study Island Home Study Program Continues

We are pleased to announce that we are able to continue to offer our students the benefit of the Study Island program. 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 Grade 3 through Grade 6 are encouraged to go to 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 Kim Sigman at ksigman@washtwpsd.org

Port Colden School
Brass Castle School

Volume 7, Issue 1

September 2014



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 co-operation in advance. If you need childcare before the start of school or after school, please contact our Child Care Director, Margaret Lyons. Mrs. Lyons can be reached at 908-413-7046.

Important Reminders

Parents and guardians please review your emergency contact information sheet and return it to school as soon as possible. Also, please review your contact information in the Honeywell Instant Alert System. It is critical to make sure this information is correct and up to date in the system so that the school can contact you regarding your child.

In addition to reviewing your contact information, please send a note to school if your child's afterschool arrangements will be modified. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your child's school.

PTA

Check the new PTA website! The website is filled with information about upcoming events and ways that you can support the school community. A link for the website is located on the district's homepage. The next PTA meeting will be held on October 7th at 7:00pm in the Brass Castle School Library.

Picture Day

Port Colden School - Wednesday, September 17th

Brass Castle School - Friday, September 19th

Thank You Mr. Jinks!

"Time is not measured by the passing of years but by what one does, what one feels, and what one achieves"

~ Jawaharlal Nehru

August 31st marked the retirement of our superintendent, Roger Jinks, who has served the Washington Township School District for the past seven years.



Mr. Jinks' career in the field of education spans a total of 43 years. He began his career as a music teacher in 1971 at Sts. Philips and James High School (which converted to Phillipsburg Catholic the following year). Mr. Jinks joined Clinton Public Schools in 1980 and began his administrative career there. In 1999 Mr. Jinks' career path led him to Franklin Township where he served as the Chief School Administrator until December 2006. We here at Washington Township were fortunate to have Mr. Jinks come into district in January 2007 where he has finished out his distinguished career as our superintendent.

We acknowledge Mr. Jinks for his outstanding leadership while in district, but all of us who worked with Roger will remember most of all his love for children. He not only made a difference for students at an administrative level, but also engaged with our students on a daily basis. It did not surprise any staff member to find Mr. Jinks sitting on the floor interacting with one of our early elementary students or alongside our older students reading a book to them, inquiring about the day's science experiment or technology project. On other occasions, he would surprise students by dressing up in the fireman's outfit for the Fire Safety Program or as Mr. Potato Head for the PTA Fall Party days, join in musical events playing the piano or drums, or lead a group of anxious incoming kindergarteners and parents through a song/dance during their orientation. Whatever the occasion, Mr. Jinks always put children first and valued their individuality.



We traditionally interview our retirees before leaving us, and we thought it would be fun to share those same topics we asked Mr. Jinks:

Where did you go to school? *Graduate of Trenton State College - BS in Elementary Education; Minor in music education; Master's Degree East Stroudsburg University*

Family: *Wife, Kathleen (who is a retired school superintendent); children - Maria, chiropractor; Kathleen, high school mathematics teacher; and Roger, Jr. - Superintendent of Hamburg School District; and four adored grandchildren..*

The best thing about being a superintendent: *"Whenever I was experiencing a problem or a unique challenge, I could leave my office and go to a classroom to witness extraordinary things happening. Enthusiastic teachers delivering material in new and exciting ways while students would respond with wide-eyed interest to the new information or the new activity. I would leave the school refreshed and renewed - ready to take on any issue, regardless of its difficulty."*



Career advice: *"As you look forward to your career choices, think about things that you are passionate about. If you are lucky enough to land in a career doing something that you love - you will never work a day in your life. I was fortunate in that way."*



Although we sadly say goodbye and thank you to Mr. Jinks, we also wish him the best in his retirement. He plans to spend time with his family, train for a half-marathon and pursue his musical interests. We know that whatever he puts his heart and mind to, he will do so with 100% commitment and joy...as he did as our superintendent here in Washington Township! Thank you, Mr. Jinks, you have made a difference for so many students in our district.

We appreciate the time you have spent with us and wish you the best on the next chapter of your life journey. Thank you for being a part of our school family!

Back-to-School Nights

Back-to-School Nights are being held on Tuesday, September 9th at Brass Castle School and Wednesday, September 10th at Port Colden School with a special Grade 6 Back-to-School / Stokes Trip Informational Night on Tuesday, September 16th.

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.

Child Care Program

We continue to offer a parent-paid childcare 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 childcare 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.

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).

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 x 610.

Meet Marge Levine - Port Colden Interim Principal

Marjorie Levine - Interim Principal, Port Colden School

My career in education began over forty years ago. During that time my positions included general and special education teacher, Instructional Supervisor, Director of Special Services and Principal. In retirement, I have been fortunate to continue my administrative career in the Alpha Boro School District, Hoboken Public Schools, and The Greater Brunswick Charter School. During my spare time I enjoy special moments with my husband, children and grandchildren.

I am so happy to be returning to Port Colden School as Interim Principal and look forward to working with the students, teachers, staff, parents/guardians, and the Washington Township community.

Grade 6 Stokes Environmental Trip

Students in grade 6 will travel to Stokes State Forest on Wednesday, September 24th through Friday, September 26th 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.



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.

More information about Title I services can be found on our district web site.

Mr. Keith Neuhs, NCLB/Title I Grant Coordinator

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.

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."

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.

The logo for Parent Connections features stylized figures of adults and children in blue, pink, and green colors, standing together. Below the figures, the words "PARENT CONNECTIONS" are written in a purple, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the logo, a small line of text reads "Brought to you by the New Jersey School Boards Association".

PARENT CONNECTIONS
Brought to you by the New Jersey School Boards Association

Check out the "Parent Connections" page on the NJ School Boards Association website at: www.njsba.org/parents.

There is a wealth of information to help keep our parents and community better informed. This site premiered last fall and continues to be updated with useful information and links.

There is information on school finance, how schools are run, and student achievement. There is also a tab that provides links to a media library with more great resources.

Counselor's Corner — September 2014

Welcome home! I hope you all had a wonderful summer.. whether you enjoyed an exciting vacation adventure, discovered a new local restaurant or were just able to take a few extra moments each day to spend together. I am happy to welcome you back to our Washington Township School 'home' this fall.

The end of the summer is bittersweet for me... I am fortunate to spend my summers with my family at the shore. The days are long and warm and we spend hours with our summer friends who we won't see again until June. When September comes the transition can be challenging - time for schedules and tight routines, real shoes instead of flip flops (though I give mine up grudgingly with the first snow!) I worry about my own children and how they will handle their transition back to school, homework and other commitments. On Monday, Labor Day, we came home and I had my kids finish up their summer reading assignments (oops - yes, we are guilty of some last minute reading.) I checked on them frequently thinking that they might be day dreaming or thinking about their summer fun sailing, flying kites and catching fireflies... My youngest sighs and then says to me "*it's so good to be home can you put a fire in the fireplace since its fall now?*" ... and BOOM - just like that the transition to fall is complete!

Our children our resilient. Though we adults may begrudge that early alarm click or find it challenging to change our evening routines to accommodate homework, our children are fine. In fact, they are more than fine, they are home.

For the 2014-2015 school year, we 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. The daily notes are a great starting point for a casual conversation with your child. This is an easy 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.)" There is no doubt that 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 - be on the lookout for this beginning in the next couple of weeks. Thank you for helping make our students bus ride to and from school a safe, respectful environment. Even if your student does not take the bus on a regular basis, this is a valuable review of respectful public conduct.

I am so thankful to be 'home' here with you in Washington Township and look forward to supporting your amazing children this year. Please contact me any time at dtierney@washtwpsd.org or at Brass Castle 908-689-1188 ext 611 or Port Colden 908-689-0681 ext 567. I look forward to speaking with you or seeing you soon...

SEPTEMBER 2014 - RESPECT

The Cornerstone Of Positive Character

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Labor Day	2 Teacher In Service	3 Teacher In Service	4 Welcome Back! Remember the GOLDEN RULE-respect yourself, your friends and your teachers	5 Start the school year with a positive attitude and share a smile!	6
7	8 Stay in con- trol- respect yourself and take pride in your work	9 Be a role model for someone younger than you	10 Use your Re- spectful be- havior on the school bus	11 Make good choices-be re- sponsible for your own ac- tions	12 Be a respect- ful listener - let others speak	13
14	15 Be your best - your teachers, friends and your bus driver will respect you for your efforts	16 Even little ges- tures matter - hold the door open for some- one today	17 Respect comes in many forms - Thank the cafeteria workers for making you a yummy lunch	18 Smile at some- one you don't usually talk to	19 Respect is catching- respect your- self and others will follow	20
21	22 Making eye contact when someone is speaking shows respect	23 Talk to some- one you don't usually hang out with today	24 Show respect for our envi- ronment - re- cycle!	25 Are you re- membering your bus man- ners?	26 We all make mistakes - show respect through for- giveness	27
28	29 Start the week off right- give someone a compliment	30 Thank a teach- er today for a great Septem- ber in school!	<i>Looking for- ward to the Week Of Re- spect October 6-10</i> 		"Knowledge earns you power, char- acter earns you respect."	