



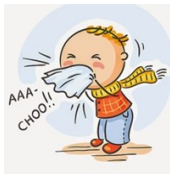
Washington Township Schools



“Making a Difference”

Save the Date Brass Castle Band Winter Concert

The Brass Castle band students under the direction of Mr. Rizzo will be performing at their annual Winter Concert on January 20th at 7:00pm at the Brass Castle School. Please come out and support the band and enjoy what is sure to be a fantastic concert.



News from the Nurses:

Vaccines Required
to Remain in School

Important Immunization Reminder for Pre-school and Pre-K Parents: All children attending a pre-school or childcare program in the state of NJ must annually receive one dose of the influenza vaccine between September 1 and December 31 of each year.

Documented proof of your child having received this vaccine should have been provided to the Brass Castle School Nurse by December 23, 2015, so your child may remain in school. Thanks for helping keep our kids and school healthy!

PARCC Parent Meeting

Results of student PARCC results were mailed home to parents / guardians on December 16th. PARCC online tests were designed to replace the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJASK) and the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) and match the content and skills outlined in the new standards that are guiding instruction.

A presentation of District testing results will be held on January 6, 2016 in the Brass Castle Library at 7:00pm. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact a district administrator.

Additional PARCC resources can be found at:

Video explaining the score reports: <http://www.understandthescore.org>

Resources for parents: <http://www.bealearninghero.org/>

Information about the PARCC assessment:

<http://www.parcconline.org/resources/parent-resources>

New Jersey specific information: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/assessment/>

Port Colden Winter Concert

On Thursday, December 10th students from Port Colden School kicked off the holiday season by presenting a wonderful winter concert. Students performed a selection of holiday and winter songs to entertain family and friends. Students in grades 1 through 3, under the direction of Mrs. Dahmer, put on a fantastic show for everyone!

Chorus Students Spread Holiday Cheer

Recently, the 5th and 6th Grade Brass Castle chorus members were invited back to Hawk Point to perform holiday songs for the Warren County Retired Teachers Association. The students enjoyed working together to prepare a repertoire for the special occasion. Song selections included, “Jingle Bells,” “White Christmas”, “Frosty” and “We Wish You a Merry Christmas”. The choral presentation was a great success! The songs shared touched many people in the audience and the students felt rewarded by a job well done!

Debate 2015!

Our young debaters came out to argue early in December at the Warren County Consortium for Student Enrichment's Annual Debate. Fifth graders earned second place honors! The affirmatives "attacked" the negatives and the negatives "counter attacked" the affirmatives during three separate rounds in the classrooms of Blairstown Elementary School. **The Resolution: *New Jersey Students are Tested Too Much.***, was the topic all were talking about. Competitors were vying to persuade the judges with their thoughtful reasons, evidences, plans, attacks, and quotes from professional sources. After the information was analyzed, the speeches perfected, and the bus boarded, students went on their way to the event to take on fellow county debaters. Kudos to all the hard work, the jitters kept at bay, and the perseverance demonstrated by our students!



Sixth Grade Teams: Katrina Kling, Sarah Schlaffer, Lucas Ribeiro, Ethan Suiter, Bryant Aguirre, Stephanie Dunlap, Jonathan Knittel, Noah DiNapoli, and Haru Watts



Fifth Grade Team: Gianna Cozzolino, Allison Slovak, Katelyn DeGeorge, and Ilya Chernkyh, Mrs. Drevitch

Gingerbread Galore!

December is a month of many fun activities and decorations and Mrs. Nalepa's first grade class dug deep into gingerbread men this month. They began by reading four different versions of "The Gingerbread Man", comparing and contrasting the different story elements such as characters, setting, problem and solution. At the end of the week, the students completed a gingerbread man science experiment to see what would happen if the gingerbread man fell into the river. They submerged a gingerbread man cookie into a tub of water and observed what happened to him over the next half hour...he began to disintegrate! Now that they knew what would happen, they were off to solve a problem...how can they make sure the gingerbread man gets safely across the river? Of course, build a bridge! The students then became engineers- planning, designing, creating, building, and repairing a bridge made from mini marshmallows and toothpicks. It was a fantastic time of learning and implementing new Science and Engineering skills into the classroom.



2nd Grade Math Enrichment Field Trip

This December, second graders in the Math Enrichment program took a trip to Harmony Township Firehouse for a “Marvelous Math” Day. There they gathered with other 2nd grade Math Enrichment students from Warren County. They participated in four different sessions made up of different math and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) components. Although the trip only took a half-day, the students were quite worn from the problem solving, collaborating, creating, experimenting and analyzing they had done all morning! They worked with fractions and created artwork that demonstrated fraction pictures and proportions. They were challenged with multistep math problems that required them to think critically and use various tools to solve. We learned new math games that helped reinforce skills and use them to think “out of the box.” We even competed to build freestanding, tall and sturdy structures using only fourhouse hold materials. It was a wonderful experience and students look forward to sharing the activities with their friends, families and teachers.



Kindergarten Thanksgiving

On November 24, 2015, the Kindergarten classes had their Thanksgiving Program in the gymnasium. Family members joined their little pilgrims and Native Americans for a performance of Thanksgiving songs. After the show the students and family members created a turkey craft. The program concluded with a delicious feast. We wish to thank all of our Kindergarten families for their generous donations!

Counselor's Corner — January 2016

... and in a blink we are on the cusp of a new year. Welcome 2016 – may our year be filled with health and contentment and a sprinkle of fun in the mix! Before the countdown to midnight on December 31st, I encourage you to find some quiet time to reflect on 2015 and swirl around your wishes and plans for the new year. This year was a banner year for our family. Our Shannon graduated from Blair and started her freshman year at Duke – though Kyle is already a junior at Yale, having Shannon head to college was a tough transition for mama (though let me tell you, she hasn't looked back!) Caeley graduated 8th grade and has soared this fall at Blair and our 'baby' Emily is Irish step dancing her way through 3rd grade...though happy, she has had some challenges socially with her peer group. Though I have experienced 'social stress' with my other girls, each individual child is unique in their perceptions and in the depth of their 'hurt.'

As the Washington Township District Anti-Bullying Coordinator I am well-versed in the language of the "bully." Understanding that 'perception is reality' for our children is so important. Each child and each situation (no matter how similar to others) is THEIRS. I am an advocate for any student who feels uncomfortable with the language or actions of others. This perspective has been supported with my extensive training and education but also by my personal experiences with my own children.

Though bully behavior is real – it is vital to remember that every push, shove and tease does not equate to bullying. Understanding that this is a sensitive topic, especially when our own little ones are involved, I remind you that I am a phone call, text or email away. Recognizing the difference between bullying and conflict is important. Generally, conflict involves antagonism among 2 or more students – 2 people can have a conflict, a disagreement or a fight. Bullying occurs when there is a 'power imbalance' and one child has a hard time defending him/herself. Bullying is a form of victimization and should not be confused with healthy (perhaps stressful) childhood conflict.

It is normal for peer conflict to occur. Students benefit in the long term from some conflict in their lives. They begin to understand their own feelings, become empathetic toward others, develop appropriate responses to difficult situations, work on anger management and learn proper behavioral responses.

Imagine your child in the future – we hope that they will have the skills to tolerate diversity, manage opinions that differ from their own and handle adult-peer competition. It is essential that we help our young ones develop these essential life skills. I am here to help our children develop skills of self-advocacy, increase personal self-esteem and teach healthy, appropriate social responses in a safe, controlled school environment. My hope is when they need to practice conflict management in the 'real' world they will have the tools to do so successfully and peacefully.

Our district does not tolerate any behavior that is mean intentioned, even when it is not considered bullying. We reinforce the core value of respect on a daily basis with our character programs 'What do you stand for' and 'Be a Bucketfiller.' When we return in January, our Community of Character trait will focus on TOLERANCE. I invite you to read the daily thought on the Character Calendar with your child.

I wish each of you a very Happy New Year! I am always available to speak with you about concerns and positive moments in your lives.

Deb Tierney

TOLERANCE - January 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>"If a child lives with tolerance, he learns to be patient."</i>	4 Welcome Back! Celebrate our Differences today J	5 It is our differences that make each day interesting – learn something new today!	6 Think about someone who is very different than you – how are you really similar?	7 Be tolerant – practice patience and kindness	8 Let us respect different opinions and ideas today (and always)	9
10	11 Do not judge anyone by their appearance alone	12 Tell your teachers why they are so special to you	13 Treat your friends and classmates how you want to be treated	14 Simply smile at someone in the hallway today J	15 Sit with someone different at lunch today – change it up!	16
17	18 Practice tolerance with kind words and respectful actions	19 Select a book about a character that is different than you – Enjoy!	20 Understand others, be tolerant and accepting	21 Don't laugh when someone makes a mistake – be a friend	22 Have an open mind – listen to your friends ideas and opinions	23
24	25 Tolerance IS respect, acceptance and appreciation for differences	26 Take the time to listen to your friends today – even if you disagree	27 Think about what makes you different, unique and special?	28 Try to be tolerant of YOURSELF – do the best you can do each day	29 Learn the art of compromise – it is sometimes difficult but is a great skill for life	30
31						



***The test of courage comes when we are in the minority.
The test of tolerance comes when we are in the majority.
R. Sockman***