



WPS Update

April 2018

The mission of the Wolcott Public Schools is to promote the academic, social, and emotional development of all students to become contributing members of the global community.

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From the Board Chairman & Superintendent:

As we come to the end of the school year, we'd like to remind you about how important it is that parents and community members participate in the process of setting the school budget for the coming year. All staffing, services, and resources are determined by our yearly budget that is given to the Board of Education by the Wolcott Town Council. While the Board's budget this year asks for a 3.03% increase, it is important to know that the Board and the Superintendent have already built in cuts in personnel and resources to get the budget down to this level. The primary reason for cost increases are special education outplacements, health care costs, and employee contracts. These are not items that can be simply cut or reduced. We have already cut more than \$500,000 from the budget in an attempt to offset the impact of the cost increases. Unfortunately, the unavoidable increases are greater than the savings that are available without cutting services to students.

Unfortunately, due to uncertainty of what our budget might be for next year, we were forced to issue 26 "pink slips" to many of our non-tenured teachers. We hope that the Council will fully fund our budget so that all of these notices can be rescinded and we keep our talented teachers.

There will be many opportunities for parents and community members to be informed about and contribute to Town Council's budget deliberations.

Tuesday, May 15th, 7:00 PM, Board of Education Offices at Alcott School. Town Council Budget Workshop. The Council will begin discussion of the budget for all departments. There is no opportunity for the public to speak but this is a very informational meeting.

Tuesday, May 22nd, 7:00 PM. Tyrrell Middle School Auditorium. Public Hearing. Any interested resident may address the Council regarding the budget.

Tuesday, May 29th, 7:00 PM, Board of Education Offices at Alcott School. Town Council Budget Workshop. The Council will discuss the budget for all departments. There is no opportunity for the public to speak but this is a very informational meeting.

Tuesday, June 5th, 7:00 PM, Town Council Regular Meeting at Town Hall. Community members may speak during Time for Taxpayers portion of meeting.

In partnership,

Lori Delbuono Bartlett, Board of Education Chairman

Tony Gasper, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

Alcott School:

The Alcott School data team has been at hard at work this school year, making evidence-based decisions to improve our practice and student achievement. Using the District Growth Plan as a guide, the AIM team (Alcott Inquiry Members) set goals that are relevant to Alcott School and created a school growth plan for school improvement at Alcott. One of our areas to focus was in our students' written responses. In our research the AIM team discovered that our students often did not cite evidence or extend their thinking when doing written responses. The AIM team felt this was a high leverage area to focus on as it could be used across the curriculum. To that effect, the AIM team created the R.A.C.E. document to be used at Alcott by students when completing written responses. R.A.C.E.: R: Restating the question A: Answer the question C: Cite evidence E: Explain and extend thinking. The R.A.C.E. document has been turned into posters that will be hung in classrooms throughout the building. Special thanks to art teacher, Sara Vumbaca for her artistic vision.



Contact Shawn Simpson, Principal of Alcott School: ssimpson@wolcottps.org

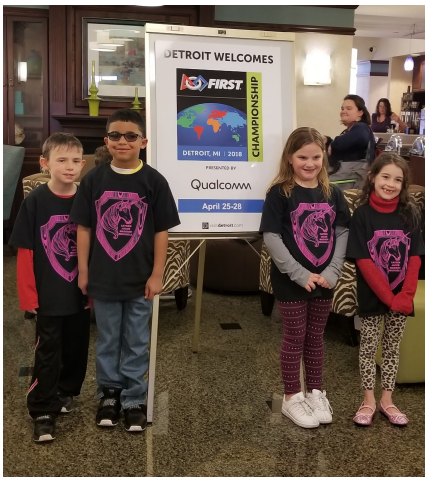
Frisbie School:

To help celebrate Earth Day, students participated in various curricular activities that centered around protecting our environment. In physical education class, second grade students rode scooters around the gymnasium to sort various items that could be recycled. Students performed a group cleanup by determining the material of the item and how the item could be reused. While in art, students experimented with using nature items as art tools and make creations out of recycled materials. Third grade students experimented with using pine needles as a paint brush while fifth grade students made action figures out of aluminum foil. Our fourth grade hallway is currently decorated with student work pertaining to an Earth Day lesson. Using our Bee A Problem Solver framework, students identified a way they could make their home a greener place and then created a plan on how they could accomplish their goal. As a culminating activity, the Frisbie community came together to watch *The Lorax*, which shared the environmental message that everyone should respect nature.



Contact Kim Murtaugh, Principal of Frisbie School: kmurtaugh@wolcottps.org

Wakelee School:



Four second grade students represented Wakelee School at the world competition in Detroit, Michigan. Tens of thousands of robotics enthusiasts from around the world were in attendance. Our Wakelee Lego League JFLL traveled with the high school Team Max. Our students had an opportunity to view many of the happenings with older teams as well as share their project. The team received an award for discover and share. The students will now present their project and experience at the world competition with their classmates.

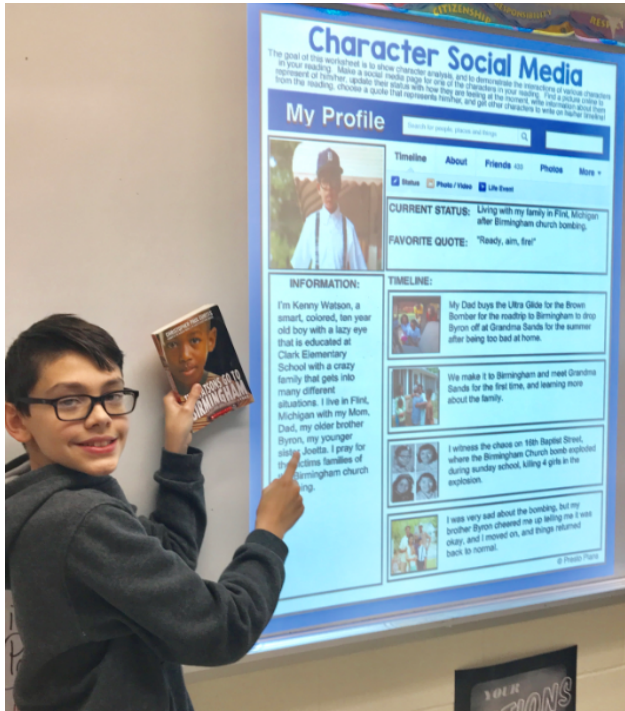
Our fifth grade students completed an instrument project. Students were given an opportunity to construct an instrument by hand. Students had to use the information they learned and hand craft an instrument. They were able to replicate an instrument or create an original using materials from around their house. Students then presented the instrument to the class. The students were very creative and a variety of instruments are now on display around the building in the showcases.

Contact Deborah Osvald, Principal of Wakelee School: dosvald@wolcottps.org

Tyrrell Middle School:

This year English Language Arts teachers are soaring even higher in the creative world of reading instruction. Shifts are due in part to engaging professional development, focusing on providing additional research based effective teaching strategies to our teachers' repertoire. In Grade 6, classes are completing a unit on the civil rights movement. This unit is filled with engrossing informational and historical fiction text, leveled for the individual reading level of each student. Audio and video is also included to better enhance the

understanding of the time period, bringing it to life for the learner. Teachers are introducing new techniques utilizing research based close reading strategies. One of these new strategies is "multiple reads". Students read and focus for specific literary devices and meaning, while each additional read prompts deeper meaning and understanding through questioning and focused instructions. "Quote attacks", another strategy, engages students to analyze a piece of text or short passage and evaluate its relevance and importance within the text. Students analyze the author's word choice, tone and theme and discuss the significance in relation to the piece. Our purpose in teaching and modeling these strategies and skills is to encourage our young readers to reach a deeper understanding of all genres of text, therefore, helping them read literature independently, while truly comprehending its meaning and importance. Our ultimate goal is to foster a lifelong love of reading for every student.



Contact Joseph Norcross, Principal of Tyrrell Middle School: jnorcross@wolcottps.org

Wolcott High School:

At Wolcott High School we are continuously seeking opportunities for our students to gain insight and skills that will help them to explore college and career opportunities. On April 25, 2018 the Wolcott high school criminology classes went to the Waterbury Police Station. This is part of the curriculum to show the students the first step of the criminal justice process. In addition, it allows the students to observe the profession of a police officer and ask questions regarding this career path. Wolcott High School SkillsUSA students Competed in the 42nd annual SkillsUSA State Competition at Wilcox Technical High School on April 6, 2018.



- Anatomy & Physiology David Lofgren 1st Place
- Freshman Leadership--- 1st Place Jessica Cyr, Top 6 Finalist Alana Ehmer
- SkillsConnect Nursing Assistant--- Autumn Briglia 1st Place, Top 6 Finalist- Tori Nanfito, Amber Belval, Christina Evangelista
- SkillsConnect Employability ---David Lofgren 2nd Place
- First Aid & CPR--- Top 6 Finalist Brooke Cyr
- Community Service--- 1st Place Julia Hynek, Norah Kader, Emily Tricarico
- Health Knowledge Bowl--- Top 6 Finalist (4th place) Tori Nanfito, Amber Belval, Stephanie Mix, Haley Conroy
- Medical Terminology--- Top 6 Finalist Christina Evangelista

The community service team, Julia Hynek, Norah Kader, Emily Tricarico are eligible to compete nationally in Louisville, Kentucky this June. Congratulations to the entire Wolcott High School SkillsUSA students who competed!

On Wednesday April 25, 2018 the School Counseling Department hosted a field trip to Western New England University in Springfield, Massachusetts. There were 30 students who attended the field trip, which provided students with a campus tour, student panel, and lunch in the university's new dining facility. Students were able to experience a college campus for the first time and better understand the college and admissions process. Western New England University is popular for Engineering, Law, Social Work, Business, and Pharmacy. Students had a great time exploring the campus and we are very thankful to WNE staff for hosting us.



Contact Walter Drewry, Principal of Wolcott High School:
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Student Services:

Earlier this month, students from Wolcott High School participated in a community outing to Walmart and Panera Bread in Waterbury. These 35 students included students from the Life Skills program, the 18-21 Transition program, Peer Helpers, and others. The students planned this leisure activity which allowed them the opportunity to practice real world life skills, as well as language and socialization skills in a community setting with their same aged peers. The students participated in a scavenger hunt at Walmart and were able to shop and purchase items while staff members and peers provided positive reinforcement and coaching in the moment. In addition, the trip provided the students the opportunity to practice ordering meals, exhibit appropriate restaurant etiquette, and determine how to calculate a tip. The students made great improvements in independently ordering food and shopping for items. What a great way to support our local community businesses!

Contact Kevin Hollis, Director of Student Services and Alternative Education: khollis@wolcottps.org



Student Learning & Teaching:

Updates on Spring Assessments: State assessment testing began in April and will continue through May district-wide. Students in Grades 3 – 8 will complete Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC) testing in the subject areas of Math and ELA. In addition, students will also take the NGSS Science Assessment in Grades 5, 8, and 11 throughout April and May.

The 2017-2018 school year marked the third year for the statewide Connecticut SAT School Day, which was held on April 24th. Each year, all students in Grade 11 at Wolcott High School are required to take the SAT. These assessments help ensure we recognize students' areas of academic success and also help to identify those areas where extra help may be needed for more individualized, targeted instruction. For more information on CT State assessments, please visit the district's web page at:

<http://www.wolcottps.org/Default.asp?L=3&DivisionID=17346&DepartmentID=18577&SubDepartmentID=12338> or visit the State's assessment portal at <http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Student-Assessment/Main-Assessment/Student-Assessment>



Contact Frank Purcaro, Director of Student Learning and Teaching: fpurcaro@wolcottps.org

Business & Operations:

The Wolcott Latchkey Program

What is New for May?

Summer Latchkey Registration is open now. You can find the registration form on www.wolcottps.org listed under Summer Studies Program.

When you register for the Wolcott Summer Latchkey Program, the cost includes Summer Studies, Lunch, Snack and Juice. We hope to see you in the Summer!



Latchkey Activities in May

May 9th - SPA DAY: The children get their hair done, nails manicured & temporary tattoos

May 11th - We celebrate Mother's Day - We will have a Mother's Day craft.
Happy Mother's Day on Sunday the 13th!

May 25th - Movie night with Cookies and Milk

May 28th - Memorial Day - No School and Latchkey is Closed.
Have a very Happy Memorial Day Weekend!

Reminder: Latchkey Registration for the 2018-2019 school-year opened on April 1st. Currently, Wakelee's PM session is full and there are only 5 spots left at Alcott and Frisbie for the PM. The AM sessions still have openings at all three schools. We always wish we can accommodate more families, but we have a limit of children we can take in the designated area. Our limit is 80 children in the morning and 80 in the afternoon. We appreciate everyone in the Wolcott School system for always supporting our program. Thank you.