



WPS Update

January 2019

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:

While we have had excellent news in the past few months about out state test scores, these mandatory tests are not all that we focus on at WPS. We want to ensure that WPS graduates are ready for the challenging and evolving world that they will find after leaving high school. We continue to move forward with a strong focus on our Vision of the Graduate (VotG) and designing ways through which it can be made a reality for all WPS students. In last month's newsletter you read about our I-LEAP project which is providing teachers with greater flexibility to experiment with new and effective methods. In January as we began the process of building our 2019-2020 budget, each school leader and department director was asked to incorporate a project that would support the fulfillment of the VotG. These projects range from simple and inexpensive to long-range and complex. During deliberations in the month of February, the Board and Superintendent will review these projects once again, supporting as many as possible while also presenting a responsible budget to the Town Council. As always, we encourage parents and town residents to be active in the budget process. Please feel free to contact the Superintendent's office with any questions.

In partnership,

Lori Delbuono Bartlett, Board of Education Chairman
Tony Gasper, Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools



Alcott School:

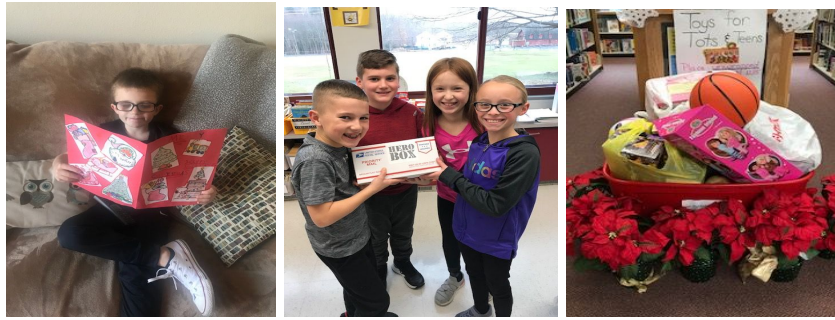
Happy New Year! 2019 is off to a great start at Alcott School. On Friday, January 25th students and staff were treated to a anti-bullying workshop presented by Master Jennifer Couture-Kelly of J.C. Karate. The students were taught about empathy and kindness and how to be empathetic and kind to others each day. They were also taught how to communicate in a positive manner to someone who is not being nice to them or to others by being an upstander and not a bystander. As a culminating event students took the anti-bullying pledge and broke boards in front of their classmates!

Congratulations are in order for the combined Alcott-Frisbie First Lego League Jr. Robotics team, the LASA Dark Voyager Cadets. This year's challenge was called Mission Moon. Students met weekly from October-January to explore the challenges associated with building a lunar base. They had to examine ways to find or bring water, energy, and food to the base as well as examine what else would be needed to allow people to live and work there. They then had to build a model of their moon base and include at least one motorized part. They also had to make a share poster that displayed what they learned. The model contained a greenhouse powered by solar panels that used recycled waste and purified urine. It also included a science lab, sleeping quarters, kitchen, medical clinic, recreation center, and a storage area. The motorized parts were a solar panel and also a conveyor belt that unloaded supplies from a rocket. They presented their model and poster at the Farmington Valley FIRST Expo and were awarded the Creative Research Award. Excellent Job LASA Dark Voyager Cadets!



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

Frisbie School:



Happy New Year! We have so many celebrations as we enter 2019! The spirit of giving was alive last month at Frisbie School. Our school community came together to support many worthy causes during the holiday season. On December 14th, students and staff dressed up in their PJs to support the patients at Connecticut Children's Medical Center who wear their pajamas for days, weeks, and even longer while fighting and receiving treatments for cancer and serious illnesses. I am happy to announce that we raised \$414 for CCMC. Throughout the month, the fourth grade team completed their community service project. This year they partnered with the HeroBox organization to sponsor 13 men and 1 woman in a military unit deployed overseas. Fifteen boxes were shipped to this unit that contained food and leisure items in hopes to provide them with "a taste of home". Also, our school collected unwrapped gifts for the Toys for Tots and Teens. Thank you to the Frisbie Community for their generosity last month as we made the season brighter for many individuals.

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

Wakelee School:

Happy New Year from the Wakelee School community. We are collected donations for the St. Vincent DePaul Homeless Shelter. Students brought in items and placed them in the boxes in the lobby for the team they wanted to win the Super Bowl, a point was given for each item donated. I would like to thank the Wakelee families for their generous contributions.



The FIRST LEGO League Jr. team had their celebration last weekend at Farmington High School. Members of the team include Michaela Torre, Madison Cormier, Caleb Messina, Adam Miller, Nathan Plona, Ivy Marroquin, Jacob Gelonese, Fiona Miller, and Cayden Gunderson. During their time together they learned about the moon and investigated what it would take to live on the moon. They also made a Lego sculpture of what they think a moon base would be like. Their sculpture and presentation board is on display in the front lobby showcase. I would like to thank Mr. and Mrs. Cormier for their continued support of our Junior team.

Bach 2 Rock: Science of Sound is a cultural arts program that was presented on January 31, 2019 by Caryn Lin. This musical artist has taken creative risks to look at music in a different way. She plays the violin with the addition of technology and electricity. Her program includes explaining the



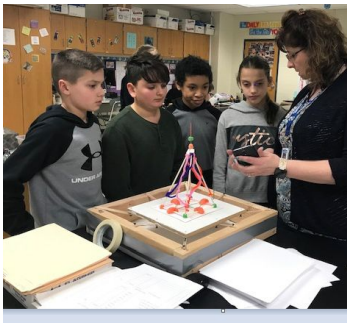
science of sound, creating music with different sounds and thinking outside the box. Students will learn about how sound effects are made and what looping means. Looping is on the spot recording of a specific sound. Caryn Lin will inspire students to try new things and find creative ways to express themselves.

For a follow up activity students will reflect on the performance and share what they learned about sound and about how Caryn Lin tried something new that changed her way of thinking and her life.

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

Tyrrell Middle School:

Over the past month, many students have been participating in a multitude performance tasks and projects aligned to real world application. In Grade 6 science classes, students are currently engaged in a performance task in which students work collaboratively to



design a structure that could withstand earthquakes. Each student group has been given a budget and choice of building supplies they can “purchase” in order to build their structure. After the planning and design process has been completed, students then build their structures according to the “blue prints” they have created. Once student groups complete the build of their structure, they are then required to test it on a shake table to simulate an earthquake. Devices are used to measure the seismic wave equivalent created by the shake table to determine the level of earthquake withstood by their structure. Students that created structures that did not successfully withstand the simulated earthquake, were afforded an opportunity to improve upon their existing design and then test their redesigned structure.

Students in grades 6 & 7 recently participated in standards aligned performance tasks that incorporated current technology and student interest. Mrs. Sinatra’s students went “old school” on a recent multi-day learning activity. After reading *A Christmas Carol* and analyzing the character of Ebenezer Scrooge, students created digital “mixtapes”. Side A was a compilation of songs showing Scrooge’s change from beginning to end, and side B was a compilation of songs that another character in the novel would have chosen to put on a mixtape for Scrooge. The written component of the activity required students to find and cite quotes from the novel while analyzing and rationalizing how the song they chose was fitting for that quote and why it worked for their “mixtape.” This activity proved to be successful in increasing the relevance of the skill of character trait and character development analysis to the students’ lives. In Grade 7 language arts, students scripted and produced their own podcasts to discuss the books they were reading in class. Students discussed key plot points, major themes, analyzed the author’s craft, and discussed character development. They learned how to persevere when things didn’t go as planned and to revise their work and their audio. By creating their own podcasts students strengthened their skills in literary analysis, writing, and collaboration.



We'd also like to congratulate Sajida Hatush and Ella Vaughn as they have been selected as this year's Hugh O'Brien Youth Leadership Ambassadors. They will represent Wolcott High School in the spring at a unique and interactive weekend program that will introduce area high school sophomores to distinguished leaders from various fields and disciplines. Through intense but informal panel discussions, HOBY ambassadors get a realistic look at their nation, its people and their own role in the world community. The participants will enhance their leadership skills and discover that they are not alone in their desire to lead and to make their schools and communities better places.

Contact Walter Drewry, Principal of Wolcott High School: wdrewry@wolcottps.org

Student Services:

On Thursday, January 24th, the Wolcott High School DECA (a National Association of Marketing Students) club hosted a dance in support of the Unified Sports Team open to the entire student body! With the Homecoming behind us and the Prom approaching, DECA members Julia Fontano, Victoria Audibert, and Sydney Gigliotti came up with the idea of holding an event inclusive of all students. Prom and Homecoming are two highlights for most high school students and the DECA members worked to create the same feeling for the athletes on the Unified Sports team. Since some students with special needs at Wolcott High School do not feel comfortable going to formal school dances, DECA came up with a more casual homecoming as a school dance.



The dance was held from 5:30-8:00 PM in the East Commons. Students filled themselves up with pizza, cookies, and baked goods. Former student Brad Watts volunteered his time to DJ for the event. DECA will directly donate all proceeds to the Unified Sports Team. The dance turned out to be a great way for special needs students to interact with peers, where everyone had a fun night of music, dancing, and snacking. Unified Sports athlete, Shaelyn Hamel stated "This is really fun! It's like a homecoming for the Unified Team."



The Unified Sports Team is a sports team created through Special Olympics Connecticut in partnership with the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC). The team allows school children the opportunity to participate in organized team sports, build friendships with their peers, and help inspire a school environment with acceptance and respect. For more info visit ciacsports.com

The DECA club is dedicated to preparing future entrepreneurs in marketing, finance, hospitality and management in high schools and colleges worldwide. For more info visit deca.org



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

Assistant Superintendent:

Update on Capstone Projects: Senior Capstone Projects represent a culminating experience in which students are expected to integrate what they learn throughout the course of their high school career and then apply it to a specific proposal or idea. Students who participate in Capstone conduct extensive research on a particular topic, partake in a corresponding hands-on learning activity, then detail their experience as part of an oral presentation. This year Senior Capstone Projects covered a wide variety of issues. Some examples of the types of projects students engaged in included: examining ways to better assist WHS students struggling with anxiety and working with

School Counseling to develop a “Zen Den” that students can utilize, partnering with CASA to create an anti-vaping video campaign, creating a documentary to educate other students about eating disorders, and completing internship hours with an Occupational Therapist then using the knowledge gained to develop and run an Sensory Walk with the WHS Unified Class as well as elementary school students in Bristol. As a result of their work, students develop a deep understanding of their topics and an advanced level of research and public speaking skills. Below are pictures from the oral presentation portion of this year’s Capstone Projects.



Contact Frank Purcaro, Assistant Superintendent: fpurcaro@wolcottps.org

Business & Operations:

FACILITIES



Hello Wolcott! I'm Wayne Natzel, the new Facilities Director for the Wolcott Schools. It's an honor to be working here alongside of the hard-working staffs of WPS. It's my desire to continue the outstanding work here done by my predecessor, Dave Stankus.



Winter in Wolcott

I was forewarned about the winter weather up here on the hill, but I didn't expect my first major weather challenge to be a major ice event. Our crews worked hard in harsh conditions to get the schools open for the return of students and staff. Ice storms are a huge challenge, and this one was made worse by the frigid air that quickly followed the storms end. As much as we tried, we were unable to get the surfaces scraped clear and soon the temperatures were below zero.

As a result, a lot of sand and ice treatments were used to keep the lots and sidewalks safe for our students, staff, and visitors. I'm glad to report that there were no slips and falls reported at any of our locations.



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