



# WPS Update

March 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 into the Spring season, it is always a fantastic time to celebrate the accomplishments of our students inside and outside of the classroom. This weekend, we encourage you to get out to the WHS spring musical, Cinderella. These productions always impress and surprise with their level of professionalism and dedication on behalf of our students. They dedicate many, many hours to their craft on top of keeping up on their studies. Also during the Spring, parents, faculty, and students will have an opportunity to come together to celebrate academic and athletic achievements at a wide range of ceremonies and banquets. We strongly encourage you to attend if you're available to see the high level of dedication that Wolcott's students show on a daily basis.

As we have written to you recently, the Board has completed its deliberation on what budget to propose to the Town Council. This is always a difficult task for all involved as Wolcott has a long tradition of financial prudence and funds schools at a lower level than similar school districts. This Board budget requests a 3.03% increase over the current year. We want the community to understand that, despite the requested increase, this budget already represents cuts in spending where the Board and administration can do so. Increases in costs that the Board cannot easily control such as special education, busing, salaries, and energy resulted in much more than a 3% increase. However, we worked hard to make cuts and delay projects wherever possible so as to offset the increases that we cannot easily control. We have also budgeted a small increase for additional staff connected to school safety.

On Wednesday, April 11th in the WHS Resource Center, we will present our budget to a joint meeting of all schools' PTOs. The meeting begins at 6:00 PM. Parents are encouraged to attend. On Tuesday, April 17th the Board and Superintendent will present our proposed budget to Town Council. Families are encouraged to be present and participate in the process in order to represent what is important to you.

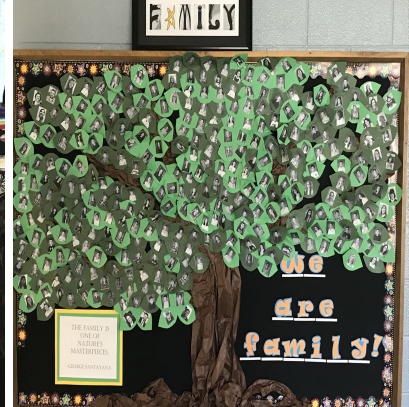
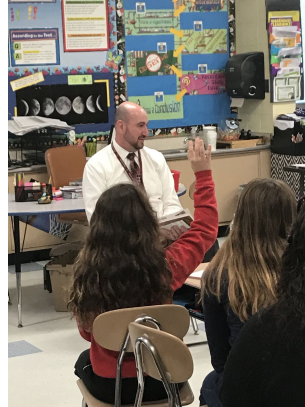
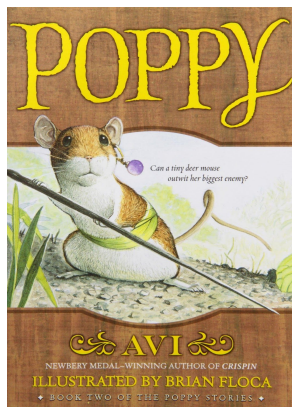
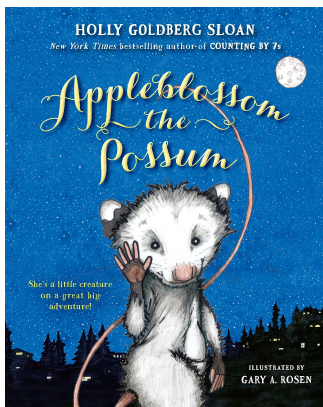
In partnership,

*Lori Delbuono Bartlett*, Board of Education Chairman

*Tony Gasper, Ed.D.*, Superintendent of Schools

# Alcott School:

Recently Alcott School started its “One School One Theme” initiative. Throughout the month, students in grades K-2 will be reading *Apple Blossom the Possum* by Holly Goldberg Sloan and students in grades 3-5 will be reading *Poppy* by Avi. The theme of these two books is “family”. Throughout the school you will see projects, photos, and bulletin boards about these novels and what family means to us at Alcott. To kick things off, we had Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Gasper, and Director of Student Learning and Teaching, Mr. Purcaro come to Alcott to read the first chapter of each book. As a culminating activity we will have a presentation to the entire school by the Beardsley Zoo at the end of April. Happy Reading!



Contact Shawn Simpson, Principal of Alcott School: [ssimpson@wolcottps.org](mailto:ssimpson@wolcottps.org)

# Frisbie School:

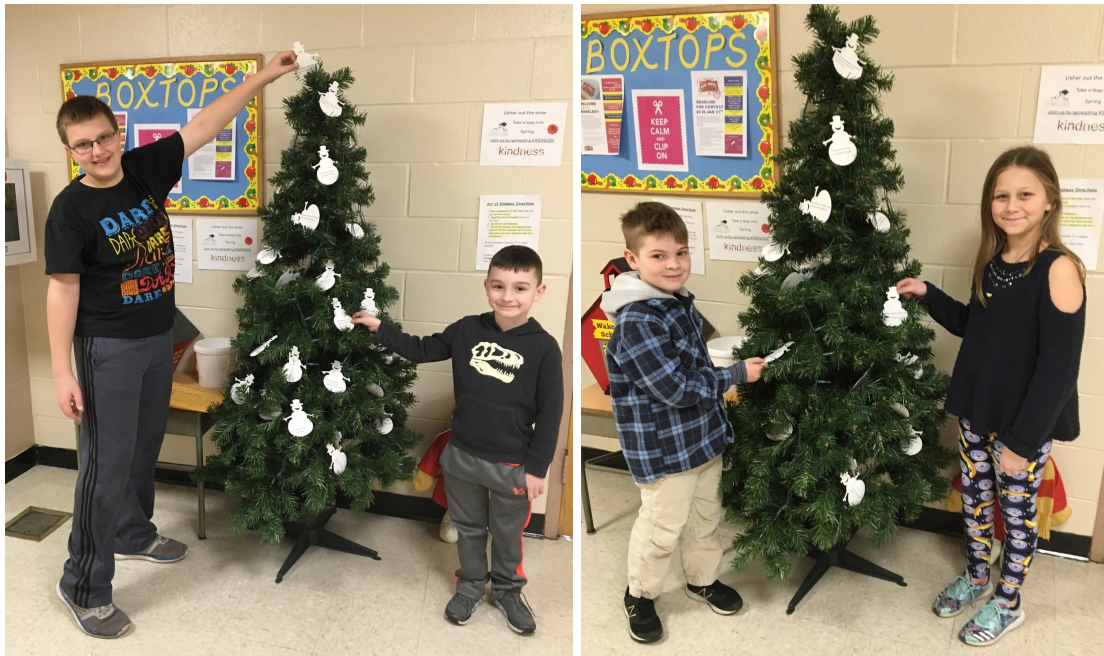
On March 5th, we celebrated Read Across America Day at Frisbie School. Each classroom paired up with another classroom to share the joy of reading with each other. Teachers shared an audio clip of a famous celebrity reading *Horton Hears a Who*. From this book, students took away the message of “A person’s a person no matter how small” and to treat everyone with kindness and respect. Our creative student council members used pom poms to create weepuls, a trend from the 70’s and 80’s. Every member of our Frisbie community was given one of these colorful weepuls with a message of “You Matter.” During the week, the fourth grade students used the chromebooks to research information about Theodor Seuss Geisel. Using the research, they created factual acrostic poems about this great American author. It was a great way to celebrate this author’s life and the many wonderful books he left behind for us to enjoy.



Contact Kim Murtaugh, Principal of Frisbie School: [kmurtaugh@wolcottps.org](mailto:kmurtaugh@wolcottps.org)

# Wakelee School:

Wakelee students and staff are taking part in Usher out the Snow: Take a Leap into Spring. There is an evergreen tree in our main lobby with snowmen hanging from it's branches. On these snowmen there are Acts of Kindness. Some examples include: to say good morning to at least 2 people or help somebody having trouble today. There are enough snowmen for each student and staff member to take one. Students will complete the act of kindness then write their initials on the back. Lastly, the student will place the snowman in the bucket. This activity is an example of ways in which Wakelee students and staff continue to find opportunities to be kind to others and to let others know "You Matter". The You Matter campaign has allowed students and staff to continue to foster an environment that promotes the social and emotional development of all students. I would like to thank the Wakelee Student Council for their creativity and the time spent to make the snowmen, it is greatly appreciated!



Contact Deborah Osvald, Principal of Wakelee School: [dosvald@wolcottps.org](mailto:dosvald@wolcottps.org)

# Tyrrell Middle School:

The annual World Language Month International Food Fair was held on March 22<sup>nd</sup> as the culminating activity in observance of World Language Month. Students spent class time integrating cultural research with the creation of visual representation of their research in the form of informational cultural display posters. In addition, students prepared foods related to the country they chose to research. Over 30 different countries were represented, and it was extremely well attended by over 200 parents, students, and staff.



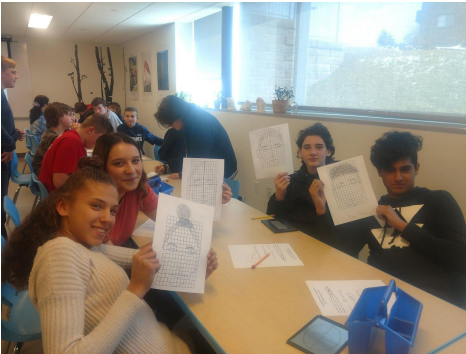
The Food Fair was one of the many activities associated with World Language Month. Academic activities associated with World Language Month aligned with this year's theme: Being Multilingual-Making My Dreams Come True. This year's theme and projects focused on countries whose native languages are Spanish or French. The most popular activities associated with World Language Month seemed to be the culminating food fair activity as well as the weekly trivia contest that was read during morning announcements each week. Prizes were awarded to the winners of the poster contest and the trivia contest as well. Student research and posters are currently being prominently displayed throughout the building.

On a different note, there are several students and groups of students who have recently earned impressive academically related accolades. Makayla Cossette has advanced to the final round of the state-wide geography bee which will be held on April 6th at Central Connecticut State University. Joey Macary has advanced out of the Hartford Region to State Finals in the Connecticut History Day competition with his research paper: From Compromise to Chaos: The Peloponnesian War. Lastly, there were a number of Tyrrell Project Explore students who participated in the National Sigma Math Competition, and several Tyrrell math teams earned recognition in this national competition. The Grade 6 team earned a top twenty finish, while the Grade 7 and combined Grades 6-8 teams finished in the top ten nationally!

Contact Joseph Norcross, Principal of Tyrrell Middle School: [jnorcross@wolcottps.org](mailto:jnorcross@wolcottps.org)



# Wolcott High School:



On Pi Day, March 14th, students in the Geometry Honors classes attended a field trip to the New Britain Museum of American Art. Students toured the museum, where math was highlighted in various pieces of art, including proportions, geometrical shapes, and the Golden Ratio. Students then had the opportunity to create Math-terpieces of their own! Students used graphing and proportions to draw their math selfies and showcase some of their work.

On Wednesday, March 28th, the Wolcott High School and Frisbie Elementary School's Relay for Life teams traveled to the capital to attend the ACS CAN Day, in order to support Tobacco 21. Members tried to promote and persuade legislators to vote to change the legal age of purchasing cigarettes from 18 to 21. The team supported this endeavor because of the high rates of underage teens being able to acquire cigarettes, the likelihood of the development of lung cancer from smoking, and in an effort to better protect citizens from starting to smoke at a young age. At the Capital, members listened to speeches from leaders of the American Cancer Society and ACS CAN Ambassadors. They also spoke to Representative Rob Sampson and Senator Joe Markley in order to persuade them to cast their votes for the bill. Members shared statistics and personal experiences about the dangers of smoking to both legislators in order to gain support for Tobacco 21, some of which include the fact that, "National data show that about 95 percent of adults who smoke began smoking before they turn 21."



Contact Walter Drewry, Principal of Wolcott High School: [wdrewry@wolcottps.org](mailto:wdrewry@wolcottps.org)

## Student Services:

We are creating scientists in our preschool program! Twice a month, our 4 year old pre-kindergarten students have been involved in various science experiments and are becoming familiar with vocabulary terms such as hypothesis, observation and results. The students have been participating in groups of three-four completing science activities which last approximately 10 minutes. Previous experiments have involved observing which materials melt ice the quickest, observing the changes in growing plants and observing the life cycle of a butterfly. In March, the students were engaged in many activities around the theme of St. Patrick's Day and rainbows.

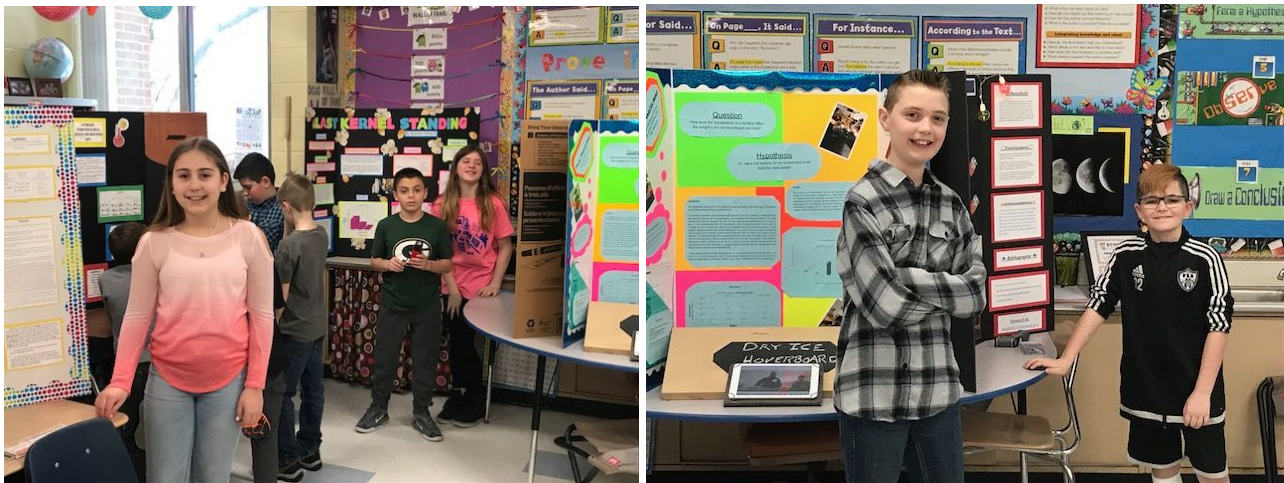
The students were asked to arrange skittles candies in a circle and pour water in the center. When asked what their hypothesis was, many of the student reported that "the Skittles will float". They were amazed when they saw a rainbow appear!



Contact Kevin Hollis, Director of Student Services and Alternative Education: [khollis@wolcottps.org](mailto:khollis@wolcottps.org)

# Student Learning & Teaching:

Update on Science Curriculum and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Released in 2013 and adopted by the State of Connecticut in 2015, the Next Generation Science Standards set new benchmarks for what student should be able to know, do, and understand in science classes as they progress through each grade level. The standards call for an increased focus on the connections between Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) while placing greater attention on developing the critical thinking and problem solving skills necessary for success in many 21st century careers. Wolcott is taking a three year approach to the roll-out of NGSS. This year, we are in the process of revising our science curriculum in grades 6-10 to align to the standards. Next year we will be engaging in similar work in grades 5, 11-12, and in year three we will complete the integration of the standards into the curriculum with revision work in grades K-4. The three year roll-out in these targeted grades will help best prepare students for both the corresponding NGSS Field Test in 2018 and the live assessment in 2019-20. In cooperation with consultants from the local Regional Educational Support Center (RESC), teachers are being provided training and support on instructional strategies to support the implementation of the curriculum. This includes strategies for integrating new engineering practices, as well as the use of observable, real-world phenomena to further promote student inquiry and engagement. Wolcott students will be introduced to aspects of the new curriculum through the remainder of the year and students in grades 5, 8 and 11 will participate in the NGSS Field Testing this May. More information about NGSS can be found on the Connecticut State Department of Education Web Page at: <http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Science/Science-Standards-and-Resources>. The pictures below show 5th grade students with their projects at the Alcott Science Fair this month.



Contact Frank Purcaro, Director of Student Learning and Teaching: [fpurcaro@wolcottps.org](mailto:fpurcaro@wolcottps.org)



# Business & Operations:

## Food Service Department



## Healthy Choice Reminders

Breakfast is served at all Schools, before school starts in the café and during study halls at Tyrrell Middle and Wolcott High.

Elementary students can purchase morning snacks or breakfast meals before school starts in the café.



Did You Know:

- All our snacks meet the Federal and State of Connecticut Healthy Food Requirements.
- We purchase local produce whenever possible.
- All our apples, peaches and pears come from a local Connecticut orchard.
- Ninety percent of all produce served to students is grown in the United States.
- At a minimum at least 3 different vegetables and 3 different fruits are offered to students daily.

## Cost & Payment Options



	<u>How much is lunch?</u>	<u>How Much Is Breakfast?</u>
Elementary	\$2.15	\$1.50
Tyrrell Middle	\$2.65	\$1.50
Wolcott High	\$2.90	\$1.50



### **How do I pay for School Meals?**

**Prepay at School:** Send in a check or cash, the manager will deposit the money into your child's account. Make check payable to Wolcott School Lunch Program. Please include child's name on check.

1. **Prepay Online:** Use a credit card, debit card or e-check by calling 866-883-6035 or log in at [www.mypaymentsplus.com](http://www.mypaymentsplus.com)
2. **Daily Payments:** Students pay for their meal with cash as they go through the serving line.

### **What is the difference between the meal and the general account?**

Money placed in the meal account can only be used for one lunch meal and one breakfast meal a day. Money placed in the general account can be used for meals and/or snack and breakfast items.

### **Can my children charge their lunch?**

Wolcott Public School has an **emergency only charge policy**.

When the first meal is charged the cashier will remind the student to bring in money. Letters will be sent home at least once a week with the children for all negative balance accounts. If the parent fails to provide the child with lunch money the principal will be notified and privileges may be denied to the student. ***Students with negative balances will not be able to buy ala carte items until the balance is paid.***

If family circumstances or income change, because of unemployment or disability or family increase in size, your family may apply or reapply for free and reduced meals. You may file anytime during the academic year. Applications are available at all schools and on our website <http://www.wolcottps.org/>.

If you have any questions please call the Food Services Department at (203) 879-8145 or email [egirgenti@wolcottps.org](mailto:egirgenti@wolcottps.org)