

West Hartford Public Schools
Office of the Superintendent
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West Hartford, CT 06107

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CONNECTIONS

With the West Hartford Public Schools

Connections is a districtwide publication presented to you by the Office of the Superintendent, West Hartford Public Schools, 50 South Main St., West Hartford, Connecticut 06107



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Clear Paths. Bright Futures. No Limits.



“The world breaks everyone, and afterward, some are strong at the broken places” -Ernest Hemingway

As parents, we want to do nothing more than make things easier for our children. The pain of seeing them suffer or struggle can be a very difficult road to take and all parents should know that they are not alone and that our support staffs are there to help in these struggles. With that said, it is important that we remember that we must not only teach the traditional “three r’s”, but that, for our children to become the adults that we want them to be, we must help them to be resilient.

I honestly believe not only that all children can learn, but that they are always learning. What we need to focus on is if they are learning the right things from us? What messages are we sending? When children make mistakes, do we talk to them about owning it and accepting consequences that might be difficult in the short term, or do we teach them about loopholes, and how to get away with things? Do our actions, in the way we live our lives, give them clear examples of doing things the right way? Do we allow them to make mistakes, and grow from them, and persevere, or do we shield them from failure?

Resiliency is sometimes called grit, or toughness, but I think of it as having the confidence to know that you can make it through anything, no matter how hard it seems. As adults, we know what the world will hold for our children in their future...with all of the good that we hope for, we know that there will be tough times. Relationships will end. They might get dumped. They might get fired. They will have a boss they hate. People that they love will die. What they learn about themselves in these formative years will help them to learn that they can handle it, and that indeed, they will survive and thrive. The only way to learn that is to do it. We must give them these opportunities.

Let your children fail, sometimes, at some tasks. If they are struggling with a homework assignment, they will find far more validation by going to the teacher, and admitting their troubles, and asking for help, than if you do it for them. If they don’t make a travel team, is it better for you to critique the coach in front of them, or to talk about what they can work on to be better next year? If they don’t get the lead in the play, is it better to talk about the unfair process, or to talk about what they did really well, while helping them to understand that we don’t always make a great fit for every role we hope for in life? If they get into trouble, is our focus on evasion, or correction?

A Japanese proverb says “Fall seven times, stand up eight.” **Sometimes our children will need help getting up, to be taught how to get up. But they need to fall first.** We cannot childproof their lives the way we did our kitchens when they were toddlers. West Hartford Public Schools is committed to helping to raise our children to be adults that know that they can make it through the tough times. Don’t be afraid to ask for a teacher or counselor’s help, and to celebrate your children not for falling down, but for bouncing up.

3rd Issue

16-17

A Look Inside:

- Kindergarten Transition Process
- Summer School Programs
- 2017-18 Pre-Kindergarten Programs
- Outreach Coordinators Added

Upcoming Events



Solisti, Chocolate Café

Feb. 25, 2 p.m. & 7 p.m.
Town Hall Auditorium
\$18 reserved table seating/\$15 general admission balcony seating
For more information call 860-232-4561, ext. 6389
Tickets: www.solisti.us/events; follow link to Chocolate Café tickets

ArtBeat

Townwide Student Art Exhibition
West Hartford Art League Clubhouse
Gallery on Buena Vista Road
March 8 - 26
No charge
Opening reception, March 8, 4:30-6:30 p.m.
For information, call 860-561-6638

Hall, Pops ‘n Jazz

March 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 7:30 p.m.
Hall High School Auditorium
Tickets: www.hallhighjazz.com starting Feb. 6,
Hall High Box Office opens Feb. 22, call 860-929-5151
Adults \$18; students \$14
Free performance for senior citizens: March 15, 2 p.m.

Conard, Musical “Cinderella”

March 10, 11, 17 & 18, 7 p.m.
March 12, 2 p.m.
Conard High School Auditorium
For more information and tickets (beginning Feb. 22), visit www.conardhighschoolmusical.com
Tickets are Adults \$18/Students \$15

Inter-Elementary School Festival of Music

May 25, 7:30 p.m.
The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, Mortensen Hall
Tickets: visit www.bushnell.org after April 18
For more information, call 860-561-6638

School Art Shows

Throughout the spring there are student art shows at all schools in town. Call individual schools for specific information.

Spring Concerts

Throughout late April, May and June

Distribution of *Connections*

An on-line version of *Connections* With the West Hartford Public Schools is now available at <http://www.whps.org/connections.pdf>. If you do not wish to have a copy of *Connections* mailed to your home, please email connectionsout@whps.org with your name, address, child’s name and school. Thank you.

Kindergarten Transition Process

We look forward to welcoming new Kindergarteners and their families to West Hartford Public Schools for the 2017-2018 school year. Our transition process for you and your children is designed to provide multiple opportunities to meet school staff and learn about our schools. As a school community, we appreciate that all children come to Kindergarten at various stages of learning and development and look forward to supporting all of your children.

What do I do to enroll my child in Kindergarten?

If your child is 5 years old on or before January 1, 2018, please contact your elementary school and let them know you have an incoming kindergartner for the 2017-2018 school year. The school will send you information on kindergarten transition and registration. Not sure where your elementary school is? Find an interactive map at <http://www.whps.org/page.cfm?p=1346>.

What does the transition process involve?

- Each elementary school will host evening **Parent/Guardian Orientation Sessions**.
- Each school will host a daytime **Kindergarten Registration event** for the child and adult to provide necessary registration paperwork, meet the teachers, and visit the school.
- Dates and times of the spring orientation sessions at each school are posted on our district website www.whps.org (search keyword "Kindergarten Transition")
- The first day of school will be August 30, 2017.

Questions? Visit www.whps.org, and click on Offices in the navigation bar to find the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, or contact Irene Garneau, Dept. Supervisor for Early Childhood Education at Irene_Garneau@whps.org or call at 860-929-5552.

2017-18 Pre-Kindergarten Programs

Applications for the Charter Oak International Academy, Florence E. Smith STEM School, and Webster Hill School 2017-2018 school-day Pre-Kindergarten programs will be available beginning January 12, 2017. Applications will be available in all West Hartford Elementary School Offices, in the Residency Office (room 154) at the Town Hall and on the West Hartford Public Schools website (www.whps.org).

Applicants must reside in West Hartford and must be four years old on or before January 1, 2018 for programs at Charter Oak, Smith and Webster Hill. Charter Oak is also accepting three year olds who must be three on or before January 1, 2018. Enrollment will be granted based on a lottery system.

For more information and dates for the Pre-Kindergarten Open Houses, go to www.whps.org or call Irene Garneau, Dept. Supervisor for Early Childhood Education, at (860) 929-5552.



Continuing Education Summer School Programs

Now is a great time to plan ahead for children and teens to avoid the "summer slump." West Hartford Continuing and Summer Education offers a variety of dynamic academic and enrichment options to keep children and teenagers productively engaged. Four popular Continuing Education summer programs are:

Get Ready At Summer Pre-School (G.R.A.S.P.) is a summer school offering for children entering kindergarten in the fall. The program emphasizes experiences in

early learning skills including learning to pay attention, following instructions, taking turns, and completing tasks. Children enjoy music and art projects and experience activities designed to improve small and large motor coordination.

Summer Fun for Preschoolers offers creative summer-fun activities which include a variety of nature experiences where sensory, motor, and language skills will be specifically designed to meet the developmental needs of children ages 3-5.

Moving On Up is a great way to get ready for first grade. Children experience reading, math, science and listening skills. Activities include puppetry, crafts, singing, dancing and videos.

The **West Hartford Inter-district Summer High School** offers over forty courses for "get ahead" credit, skills development, credit recovery, and enrichment. The summer high school also offers a variety of non-credit programs for middle school students.

Summer learning experiences through West Hartford Continuing Education promotes academic and social development and still provides plenty of time for vacation and relaxation.

- Dates for the Summer PreK - Grade 1 program are June 26- July 22. The location will be at Whiting Lane.

- Dates for the 2016 WHPS Inter-District Summer High School are Semester 1 - June 26 to July 14; Semester 2 - July 17 to August 3. The location will be at Conard High School.

For your convenience, the Office of Continuing Education also accepts registrations online, by phone, fax, mail, or in person. Online summer registration will open beginning 1/30 at www.whlifelearn.org.



Outreach Coordinators Added

With funds provided by the State Department of Education, the West Hartford Public Schools enhanced its services and supports for newly arrived immigrant children and families by adding two part time outreach coordinators. These coordinators ensure effective home-school communication, encourage active family engagement, and support student success.

With a long history of working with students and families in both school and community programs, Ms. Yadiris Vega was selected to serve as the Elementary English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Outreach Coordinator. In this role, Ms. Vega assists new families to become familiar with the schools, school staff, and programs that are available to children and families. Through her meetings with families at school or during home visits, Ms. Vega assists families in their transition to West Hartford. At the middle school level, she offers tutoring services to students two days per week to support their academic success.

Mrs. Fabiana Silva is serving as the High School ESOL Outreach Coordinator. Her professional experience includes working in higher education as a financial aid advisor and as a case manager with community support groups. Mrs. Silva is trilingual and works directly with high school students through mentoring, offering post-graduate planning sessions, and facilitating a citizenship club for students to learn about the immigration and naturalization process. In addition, she assists immigrant families as they work with school personnel to support student success.

Working with the ESOL Curriculum Specialist and the ESOL teachers, the outreach coordinators have already hosted several family events. Over 70 families attended the programs. During the evening children and their family members were welcomed into the school community, provided with vital information about the district, met key staff members and shared stories and experiences.