



Building the road to success

Welcome to the Woodland Park School District e-Newsletter, which will be sent out weekly when school is in session. This will serve as a glimpse of some of the wonderful things going on in our schools, as well as a point of reference for upcoming events.

Your Partner in Education,
Michele R. Pillari, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Important dates to note

Monday, Sept 10., 7 p.m. -
Board of Education workshop
meeting at CO School

Wednesday, Sept. 12 -
BG Picture Day

Thursday, Sept. 13, 6:30 p.m. -
Kindergarten Ice Cream Social
at CO School

Monday, Sept. 18, 7 p.m. -
Board of Education regular
meeting at Memorial School

Tuesday, Sept. 18, 7 p.m. -
CO and BG HSA meeting,
at CO School

Thursday, Sept. 20 at 7 p.m -
Memorial HSA meeting

Tuesday, Sept. 25, 6:30 p.m. -
BG Back to School Night

Wednesday, Sept. 26, 7 p.m. -
CO Back to School Night

Thursday, Sept. 27, 6:30 p.m. -
Memorial Back to School Night

Friday, Oct. 19 - Memorial
HSA Harvest Fest/Tricky Tray

Friday, Nov. 16 - BGHSA
Purse Bingo

Many changes are in store for students this year

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome back to another exciting year! I truly hope you were able to take some time to relax and enjoy the lazy days of summer with your family and friends. This time each year, I take a moment to sit back and ask myself, "Where did the summer go?" It seems to slip through my fingers faster and faster every year. At the same time, here in our schools, we have been working tirelessly to ensure that we are ready for the students to return.

First and foremost, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the secretarial staff for working to prepare for September. These individuals are instrumental in ensuring that everything is in order for the first day of school. Their dedication to our school community is beyond compare!

We continue to make great strides in the area of curriculum and program. This summer we worked to refine the ELA rubrics for the K-4 standards-based report cards. These rubrics have been restructured in order to highlight specific and targeted skills per trimester which will provide the parents with more in-depth description of student performance expectations in each area.

I am proud to announce that CO School has been awarded a grant. This grant provides us with an opportunity to work in partnership with Rutgers University and New Jersey Department of Education. This partnership, New Jersey Tiered System of Supports (NJTSS), is an evidence-based framework for implementing academic and behavioral supports and interventions to improve achievement for all students. The work is centered on the core components of the three-tier prevention logic of Response to Intervention (RTI). This is a systematic, consistent approach to prevention, intervention and enrichment for students in need. It provides for a continuum of supports based on student learning of grade level knowledge and skills; Enhances the capacity of the classroom teacher to address learner variability; Supports Professional Learning Communities as a mechanism for problem solving and professional development.

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Fall events are being planned by Home & School Associations

Our local Home & School Associations have been getting ready for the school year and have been busy planning lots of events for the students. These volunteer groups rely on the support of parents, guardians, teachers and the community to accomplish their goal of providing educational programs and fun activities for the students to enjoy throughout the school year.

The Charles Olbon and Beatrice Gilmore Schools HSA's will be holding joint meetings this year, as many parents have children in both schools. The first meeting will be Tuesday, Sept. 18 at 7 p.m. at Charles Olbon. Membership forms will be available. Come meet the new boards, provide your input and feedback, and sign up for event and activity committees.

The COHSA is planning a number of events this fall including a pajama story time night on Sept. 20, a clothing drive and several fundraisers. Join the group's private Facebook page "COHSA" to stay up to date on all the activities planned.

The BGHSA is working on its big fall fundraiser, a designer purse bingo night, planned for Friday, Nov. 16 at the Boys & Girls Club. Join the group's private Facebook page "BG HSA" to stay up to date on all the activities planned.

The Memorial School HSA will host its first meeting on Thursday, Sept. 20 at 7 p.m. in the cafeteria. For anyone interested in joining the 8th Grade Committee, there will be a meeting right afterwards to discuss the 8th grade dance. This fall, the HSA is planning a Harvest Food Festival/Tricky Tray on Friday, Oct. 19 at the Boys & Girls Club as well as a clothing drive at the club on Saturday, Oct. 27. Join the group's private Facebook page "Woodland Park Memorial Middle School HSA" to stay up to date on all the activities planned.



Library will celebrate the accomplishments of summer readers

The Alfred H. Baumann Public Library will hold its annual End of Summer Party on Saturday, Sept. 8 from 12 to 3 p.m. The party is a celebration of all of the reading that was done over the summer months by those children that participated in the Summer Reading Program at the library. It will be held on the library grounds where there will be games, a bounce house, cotton candy, ice cream and more. Summer reading grand prizes will be awarded. There will be a water balloon toss at 1 p.m. and sack races at 2 p.m.

"This year we saw a record turnout," said Allie Steiger, Youth Services Librarian. "This year the public library partnered with the Woodland Park School District, grades K through 4, resulting in a 34 percent increase in participation."

"We wanted the students to experience reading for pleasure and pure enjoyment over the summer months, that will in turn create life-long readers and library users," stated Linda Hoffman, Library Director. "I hope to see the summer reading partnership with the school expand even further next year."

The library was abuzz with children all summer long, providing programs for children of all ages. One of the highlights was a "Coding Caterpillar" program for incoming Kindergarten students and a "Tinker Kids" S.T.E.M. program for middle school students.

Additionally this summer, the library partnered with the Municipal Alliance Against Alcohol & Substance Abuse and On the Border Restaurant to bring a copy of "The Story of Ferdinand the Bull" to 100 families in the community. Families picked up the copy of the book at the library, were asked to read it together and do accompanying activities and then join the Alliance at the library for an outdoor showing of the movie "Ferdinand." On the Border restaurant supplied chips and salsa and certificates for free meals and appetizers to all that attended the event. Families were able to keep the book for their home library.

Rain date for the end of summer party is Sept. 9 from 12 to 3 p.m.

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This school year we are participating in a partnership with United Way of Northern New Jersey. This partnership will provide Memorial School with an opportunity proactively address the culture and climate within the school. This school support network will serve as a means for school personnel to learn more about school culture and climate and social-emotional learning, access resources and share ideas and expertise. The School Support Network exists to support efforts to make lasting positive change in our school and deliver professional development to help us to continue to create an environment where children can thrive.

The technology department has been working diligently this summer to prepare all of our technological needs for September. Our 1:1 initiative in grades 2-8 will be fully implemented in September. We are so very excited for the opportunities our students now have at their fingertips each and every day. Teacher workstations have been upgraded and our bandwidth has been upgraded as well in order to support our growing technological needs. We have also begun to install security camera upgrades at BG School. In addition, reimaging and regular maintenance to the computers in our district has been ongoing and continuous throughout the summer months. Please join me in thanking our technology team for working on this during the summer months for a successful implementation in September.

Mr. Burrows and our custodial team have been working tirelessly this summer in order to get the buildings and grounds ready for the opening of school. Our annual summer cleaning at each of the buildings has been completed in addition to some special projects which I would like to highlight. The media center at CO School has been completely renovated creating a workspace conducive for 21st century learning. All of the hallways have been painted to create a fresh, clean look for the all to enjoy! Work has also begun on the creation of an outdoor classroom.

Space is limited at Memorial School, however we were able to create a new classroom to accommodate our population and is ready for use in September. To ensure proper ventilation in the school, new exhaust fans were installed on the gym roof. Air conditioning has been installed in the cafeteria.

We are in our third year of our district wide paperless initiative. It is imperative that our families utilize the parent portal as important information will be disseminated through the portal, such as progress reports, report cards, letters, memos, and all information pertinent to the student. It is also essential that the schools have current email addresses and phone numbers for our families as we will be sending more and more information out through email and text message blasts. Our district website continues to serve as a tremendous resource for all. The website will be one of our main means of communication. Please check it frequently for important information and updates. As a reminder, our email addresses are first initial + last name @wpschools.org. I urge you to utilize the website to learn more about our educational programs and to stay updated on important news and upcoming events. In the coming weeks, teachers will begin posting important class information as well as homework on their personal webpages which will be directly linked to this site. This should act as a great resource to you at home. Active use of the webpage is preparation for our educational community as we prepare to use less and less paper throughout the course of this school year.

In closing, please know that I take pride in our school and community and am grateful each and every day to be here with your children. I remain committed to and will always work with integrity to make informed decisions that are in the best interest of the students. Our objective, as a staff, is to provide exceptional teaching and learning opportunities which take place in a caring, yet challenging academic environment. As a school community, we realize that all students need a supportive, nurturing setting that suits their developmental needs. As a result, we always strive to strike the balance of challenging and nurturing your children here in Woodland Park Public Schools.

I continue to remain energized and enthusiastic about our direction. We are moving our school district forward and it is truly amazing to be a part of the process with each and every one of you. Our home-school educational community continues to grow because we remain focused on accomplishing our mission: "To promote educational experiences which will prepare our students to develop high levels of academic achievement, engage in a lifelong desire to learn and develop a deep respect for life and its diversity in our global society." If we truly believe this in our hearts, then we will achieve! Remember: We are all in this together.

Thank you for your continued support and I truly look forward to continuing to work closely with you as we embark on a new school year.

Yours in Education,
Michele R. Pillari, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools