

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
Phone (860)561-6651

New Appointment Profiles

(Continued from page 2)

the conclusion of the committee interviews, the executive team interviewed only candidates who closely met the profile. A finalist emerged who more closely met the profile than any other, and a subcommittee of the original interview committee conducted a site visit. At the end of that visit, it was clear that we had a candidate who would serve all of the needs of the children, faculty, and parents of Conard.

Dr. Cummings received his Bachelor Degree in English from the College of the Holy Cross and his graduate degree from Fairfield University. Additionally, he received his 6th Year Certificate in Educational Administration from the University of Connecticut and his Ed.D in Curriculum and Instruction from Columbia University. Pete has spent the last eight years in various leadership roles in Farmington, including Dean of Students at Farmington High School, Assistant Principal at Irving Robbins Middle School and Principal at West Woods Upper Elementary School. Prior to that Pete taught all levels of high school English, including AP English Language. As a teacher and coach, Farmington High School students often identified Pete as the teacher who made the biggest difference in their lives. Dr. Peter Cummings is, in our estimation, the ideal fit for Conard High School.

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.

Upcoming Events

Solisti Spring Concert
May 23, 2010, 7:00 PM
No Charge
For more information,
call 860-231-6038

Permanent Art Collection Reception
June 1, 2010, 5:45 PM
Town Hall Suite 400
For more information,
call 860-561-6638

Sedgwick Middle School, Pops Concert
June 2, 2010
For more information,
call 860-570-6500

School Concerts
Throughout the spring there are concerts at all schools in town. Call individual schools for specific information.

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

Inter-Elementary School Festival of Music
June 3, 2010, 7:30 PM
The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, Mortensen Hall
Tickets: \$12.00, General Admission
For more information or tickets, call 860-561-6638

King Philip Middle School, Summerfest
June 7, 2010
For more information,
call 860-233-8230

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Third Issue

09-10

District Adopts New Mission Statement

On July 20, 2009, the Board of Education held a workshop to begin envisioning what the schools should look like in the years ahead, and they discussed the current mission and beliefs with the leadership team. In January of this year, the Board conducted guided discussions using current literature that spoke about preparing students for the 21st century. The board examined the current mission and beliefs, explored and discussed those beliefs and suggested preliminary changes to the existing mission and beliefs. Next, the school administration integrated the Board's input with staff input and drafted multiple versions of the mission to capture the main themes that emerged.

The enclosed insert includes a graphic representation of the main themes embodied by the Mission Statement, and that representation reflects our core values as a district. Also included is a "Profile of the Graduating Senior in 2020" that shows a clear alignment with our goals as a district that strives: "To inspire and prepare all students to realize their potential and enhance our global community."



Excellence Without Exception!

A Look Inside:

- Positive School Culture
- National Distinguished Principal
- Paraprofessional Support
- Board Adopts Budget
- Tim Dunn Retirement
- *Insert: Mission Statement
- New Appointments
- Graduating Senior Profile



Programs and Resources Help Create a Positive School Culture

The West Hartford Public Schools use a proactive approach to create a positive school culture pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. All of our programs are coordinated to promote tolerance, cooperation, and good citizenship that will effectively prevent bullying. We stress the partnership among home, school and community working together to build healthy relationships, to utilize interventions and to promote management with consequences. Each of our programs focuses on the explicit teaching of information and skills, which are woven into the fabric of daily school life.



Programs include:

Elementary Level: Second Step program: explicit lessons, supplemental books, and posters

Secondary Level: health curriculum: violence prevention, family life and healthy choices, sexual harassment

Middle Level: transition program, peer mediation, mentor program, Unified Theater and Unified Sports, extracurricular activities, guidance curriculum, advisor/advisee

High School Level: advisory homerooms, school-wide assemblies, new student welcome groups, adult-facilitated peer mediation, the Community of Concerns Leadership Forum, student success team, Developmental Guidance program that

focuses on interpersonal skills and peer pressure, communication and peer support, conflict resolution and stress management, opinions, beliefs and problem solving, and extracurricular activities that include a wide range of clubs and sports

Finally, we work closely with the West Hartford Police Department through in-class instruction with community officers and school resource officers. The town of West Hartford has strong community resources such as the Bridge and Hopeworks. We are fortunate to have a Leisure Services Department that provides a wide array of programs and activities that promote a healthy community and positive school climate.

Paraprofessionals Support and Assist at All Levels

Whether instructional paraprofessionals work in classrooms, in Library Media Centers, or move throughout a building, their role is always to assist teachers and support student learning. The majority of their time is spent with students, providing support for a classroom while the teacher works with small groups or working with small groups or individuals, reinforcing skills and concepts already introduced by the teacher.

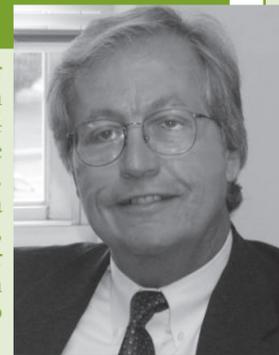
Kindergarten paraprofessionals have a unique role. Some students come to kindergarten possessing strong self-help skills (using the bathroom, packing/unpacking backpacks); others need to be taught. Some are reading and writing; others can't identify letters, sounds or numbers. Kindergartners must master an academic curriculum, acclimate to a full, structured day, learn to navigate the halls and meet the expectations of elementary school. The paraprofessional assists in dealing with the social, emotional and behavioral aspects of this adjustment.

Some schools have chosen to use paraprofessionals in their Library Media Center where they assist in the one to one teaching that is necessary as students learn new programs or research an assignment. Wherever they may be throughout a school, the paraprofessionals help to ensure the success of students by working directly with them or by providing support for the teacher.

Tim Dunn Announces His Retirement

In January, Tim Dunn, Assistant Superintendent for Administration, announced his retirement after 40 years in education, the last 26 here in West Hartford. Tim spent the first 14 years of his career in California where he was a teacher, and then he moved into leadership roles as an assistant principal and principal. Moving his family back to Connecticut so they could enjoy a community and school district widely known for its excellence, Tim became the Principal at Wolcott Elementary School. Four years later Tim was promoted to Executive Director of Human Resources, a position he held for 18 years until being promoted to Assistant Superintendent for Administration in 2007.

During his tenure in West Hartford, Tim has always relied on his experiences as a teacher and principal and the valuable lessons he has learned in those roles. Providing leadership by example, he has been a mentor and a role model for new and veteran teachers as well as for principals and other educational leaders. As a true professional with the highest integrity, Tim is always quick to remind his colleagues that we are in the most important profession... educating children. He has been a tremendous asset to our district for a long time and has given so much to this community over the years. The positive impact he has left will be felt for years to come.



Tim Dunn

New Appointment Profiles

Assistant Superintendent of Administration

In February, Dr. Karen List, Superintendent of Schools, and the West Hartford Board of Education announced the appointment of Mr. Thomas Moore to the position of Assistant Superintendent of Administration. He will officially assume his duties as of July 1st. Mr. Moore, currently Conard High School Principal, will be replacing Mr. Timothy Dunn, who is retiring in June after 40 years as an educator.

Mr. Moore received his undergraduate degree from the University of Massachusetts, and he has a Masters Degree from the University of Connecticut as well as his sixth year in Educational Leadership from Southern Connecticut State University. For over fourteen years Tom has shown his exceptional leadership abilities as a social studies teacher, Department Supervisor and Conard High School Principal. His familiarity with the West Hartford School System and his keen awareness of the job requirements will be invaluable as he addresses the needs of our district. As a



proactive and responsive leader, Tom's reputation as an honest, straightforward, and passionate communicator who values professional collaboration will help build solid connections between colleagues, families and the community.

New Conard High School Principal

In April, Dr. Karen List, Superintendent of Schools, and the West Hartford Board of Education announced the appointment of Dr. Peter Cummings as the new, incoming Conard High School Principal. Dr. Cummings will be replacing Mr. Tom Moore, who will become the next Assistant Superintendent for Administration.

Working collaboratively over the last several weeks, administration, staff and parents identified the needs of Conard High School. That work resulted in a profile of the characteristics, experiences, human qualities, and leadership style of the person who would lead Conard into the future. At



(Continued on back page)

IMAGINE the Possibilities

West
Hartford
Public
Schools

Dr. Stokoe Named Connecticut's 2010 National Distinguished Principal

The Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) has named Dr. Ellen Garber Stokoe, Principal of Edward Morley Elementary School, Connecticut's 2010 National Distinguished Principal. The U.S. Department of Education and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) jointly sponsor the National Distinguished Principals Program. One principal is chosen annually from each of the fifty states, the District of Columbia and the Virgin Islands. Dawn O'Connor, a second grade teacher at Morley, nominated Dr. Stokoe. A selection committee then identified the top three candidates from the pool of nominations. As one of the three finalists, Dr. Stokoe had to complete an extensive application, to submit a portfolio, and to host a site visit to allow the selection committee members to conduct interviews and observe the operation of her school. The awards ceremonies will take place in Washington, D.C. in the fall.



Ellen Garber Stokoe

Board Adopts Budget

This budget preserves:

- Class size guidelines throughout the system
- Award winning Art and Music and PE programs
- Support services for learners with diverse needs – special education, reading support, homework centers, extended day programming at Smith and Charter Oak
- A commitment to a broad array of courses including Advanced Placement at the high schools and Quest at the elementary and middle schools

Program changes:

- World Language instruction (K-5 in 2009-10) will be offered only in grades 3-5 next year at 10 schools and will be offered in grades K-5 at Charter Oak.

In total the budget has 23.7 fewer positions than are currently filled. Some of the reductions will be met through attrition; some will be met through layoffs.

On April 6 the Board adopted a \$126.7 million budget with a spending increase of 4.35% over 2009-10 levels. The Town Council supported this expenditure at its meeting on April 26.

Staffing reductions:

- Elementary Teachers – 6.0 based on enrollment changes – class size guidelines are unchanged
- World Language Teachers – 5.9 based on reducing World Language from K-5 to 3-5
- High School Teachers – 3.8 partly based on enrollment changes and partly based on reductions in the number of sections of courses offered
- Maintenance Staff – 2.0 positions
- Central Office – 2.0 positions – including one administrator
- Pupil Services Staff – 2.0 positions
- AIMS Program – 2.0 positions (Alternative Middle school program will only be offered at Sedgwick next year)

Mission

To inspire and prepare all students to realize their potential and enhance our global community.

High Expectations
For All Learners

Rigorous &
Relevant
Curriculum

Realize
Student
Potential

Dynamic
Teaching

Realize Student Potential

- Intellectually, physically, & emotionally healthy
- Globally competitive
- Engaged, responsible, informed citizens
- Persistence & effort
- College & career ready

Rigorous & Relevant Curriculum

- Comprehensive – academic, arts, personal wellness
- Inquiry-based
- 21st century skills
 - Problem solving
 - Communication
 - Critical thinking
 - Adaptability

High Expectations For All Learners

- Cultivate interests, strengths, & abilities
- Apply varied styles & approaches
- Understand preferred strategies
- Meet individual needs

Dynamic Teaching

- Student centered
- Skillful
- Data-driven
- Engaging
- Reflective and Collaborative
- Personalized

Our Core Values

- Set high standards
- Provide a safe environment
- Promote collaboration
- Embrace diversity
- Encourage intellectual risk taking
- Integrate technology effectively
- Demand integrity
- Support partnerships between home & school
- Foster personal wellness
- Inspire creativity & innovation
- Make all decisions in the best interests of students



Profile of the graduating senior in 2020:

- ✓ Demonstrates effective oral and written communication skills, information technology literacy skills, scientific inquiry, mathematical reasoning and an ability to access and analyze information through the selection, production and presentation of a senior exhibition.
- ✓ Is ready to participate in a democratic society and has cultivated an appreciation of the arts and attends to personal wellness.
- ✓ Participates in and contributes to a community that models and reinforces standards of ethical conduct and responsible citizenship enabling the student to collaborate across cultures and be an influential leader.
- ✓ Is a self-starter who is grounded with a deep knowledge base, is well-rounded with passion, curiosity, a questioning nature and the capacity to make the world a better place for future generations.

Profile of the graduating senior relative to our schools and the education process:

- ✓ Is achieving at high levels due to instruction that is rigorous supported by a professional community of practice with shared understandings of what constitutes good teaching, responsibility for the learning of all children, and accountability for student success.
- ✓ Has a personalized plan that charts a career and learning path for post-secondary opportunities and assists the student in identifying an authentic problem to be explored through the senior exhibition.
- ✓ Is engaged in content that is relevant because teachers know how to design tasks that are based on priority standards and require the use of critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork and are responsive to existing and emerging technology.
- ✓ Shares the responsibility for learning with parents through two-way communication that includes parent and student access to electronic student performance and attendance data, and course content management
- ✓ Benefits from resources that are allocated in alignment with a coherent district plan of continuous improvement. This plan includes revised mission, beliefs and district goals, and a high school schedule that ensures optimal learning time for students and faculty.
- ✓ Attends schools that are well maintained and renovated as needed based on a 12 year plan developed in 2010.