

West Hartford Public Schools
Office of the Superintendent
50 South Main Street
West Hartford, CT 06107

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HARTFORD, CT
PERMIT #751

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*



A Quick Update on the Charter Oak Project

The schematic design for the new Charter Oak building is complete, and costs are now being estimated. Preliminary work will be done at the site during the summer of 2014, and the full construction process is expected to begin this fall. Utility lines need to be moved, playgrounds need to be relocated, and fences need to be installed.

Charter Oak is slated to open in September of 2016.

For more information, please visit the Charter Oak new building webpage at www.whps.org and click on the blue link on the right.

Upcoming Events

Hall/King Philip, "Luv" Choral Concert
February 10, 2014, 7 PM
King Philip Middle School Auditorium
No charge

Conard, Choir Pyramid Concert
February 11, 2014, 7 PM
Conard Auditorium
No charge

Solisti, Chocolate Café
March 8, 2014, 2 PM & 7 PM
Town Hall Auditorium
\$15 table seating/\$12 balcony seating
For more information and tickets, call 231-5000, ext 4012

ArtBeat
Townwide Student Art Exhibition
West Hartford Art League Clubhouse
Gallery on Buena Vista Road
March 12 - 30, No charge
Opening Reception, March 12, 4:30-6:30PM
For information, call 860-561-6638

Hall, Pops 'n Jazz
March 14, 15, 7:30 PM
March 20, 21, 22, 7:30 PM
Hall High School Auditorium
For tickets and information, call 860-232-4561, ext. 1856
Free performance for Senior Citizens:
March 19, 2 PM

Conard, Musical "Shrek"
March 21, 22, 28, 29, 7 PM
March 23, 2 PM
Conard High School Auditorium
For more information and tickets, visit www.conardhighschoolmusical.com
Free Performance for senior citizens:
March 20, 2PM

Middle School Festival of Music
The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, Mortensen Hall
April 3, 2014, 7:30 PM
For more information, call 860-561-6638



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

Connections

With the West Hartford Public Schools

Third Issue

13-14

Board of Education Appoints New Superintendent

With a style that has been described as unique, collaborative, engaging, and approachable, Tom Moore, West Hartford's assistant superintendent for Administration, has been named the new superintendent of West Hartford schools, effective July 1.



"Tom deeply believes in our mission of inspiring and preparing all students to realize their potential."

A longtime teacher in the West Hartford schools, a respected football, baseball and girls' lacrosse coach, and an administrator who embraces and strives for excellence in all he does, Tom began his career as a history and social studies teacher at Conard High in 1996, after serving as a student teacher at Hall High. He became supervisor of the History and Social Studies Department for Conard and Sedgwick Middle School in 2005, and was named principal of Conard in 2007. Superintendent Dr. Karen List appointed him assistant superintendent for Administration four years ago.

The Board of Education was committed to finding a new superintendent who would embrace the direction Dr. List has charted for the district. "Tom is a man of principle and conviction and at the heart of his principles and conviction lies a passion for student success," the Board said in a prepared statement. "Tom deeply believes in our mission of inspiring and preparing all students to realize their potential. The Board is very excited about Tom's ascendency to the position of Superintendent and feels that West Hartford Public Schools is in excellent hands as we continue to implement several major initiatives that were launched under Dr. List's leadership, as we apply our district's belief in continuous improvement to areas that need attention, and as we embrace new challenges that will emerge under his leadership."

Tom earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Massachusetts, a master's from the University of Connecticut, and a sixth year professional diploma in Educational Leadership from Southern Connecticut State University. He has been a presenter and instructor with the Alternative Route to Certification program, and presently serves as chair of the New England Region Academic Committee of the College Board. He received the U.S. Presidential Scholar Teacher Award in 2009, was named an Educational Policy Fellow by the Institute for Educational Leadership in 2011, and perhaps most important, was selected as the faculty graduation speaker by Conard students three times in eight years, before becoming Conard's principal.

Please join the Board of Education in congratulating Tom on his recent appointment.

Connections is a districtwide publication presented to you by the Office of the Superintendent, West Hartford Public Schools

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.

West Hartford Public Schools, 50 South Main St., West Hartford, Connecticut 06107
Phone: (860)561-6651 Fax: (860)561-6910 E-Mails: superintendent@whps.org boardmembers@whps.org Website: www.whps.org

Connections

With the West Hartford Public Schools

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

Replacing CMTs and CAPTS, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Arrives in Spring

This spring, West Hartford Public Schools will administer the new annual state standardized test, the Smarter Balanced Assessment. The new tests measure student performance in the areas of English language arts/literacy and mathematics in grades 3-8 and 11. The SBAC (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium) test replaces the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) except the science components. CMT and CAPT Science remain part of the mandatory state testing program for grades 5, 8, and 10.

The length of the tests and required testing time will be similar to that of CMT and CAPT; however, the new assessment breaks the testing into smaller segments over a longer period of time to avoid instructional interruptions and student test fatigue. The new tests will be delivered online and will feature embedded technological features for a more dynamic presentation of test content (e.g. listening comprehension items with audio stimulus, graphing questions with interactive tools, etc.).

The tests have been designed in collaboration with multiple state

Departments of Education, educators and assessment professionals, and are designed to measure student progress toward the more rigorous learning expectations set forth in the Common Core State Standards.

Connecticut adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in July 2010, for mathematics and literacy instruction. The standards specify learning expectations for students across grades K-12, detailing the depth of content understanding that is needed for college and career readiness. The CCSS is not a curriculum and does

not prescribe how instruction should be conducted.

The new Smarter Balanced Assessment is aligned with the Common Core standards. Divided into two major content areas of mathematics and English language arts/literacy, it is further subdivided into an overall assessment of content, skills and understanding, and a performance task. Performance tasks require students to apply their understanding of content in authentic and real-world settings. Activities may include constructing a written argument within a persuasive writing piece, drawing

conclusions in informational writing, problem solving and communicating reasoning within mathematics, and/or conducting data analysis and modeling phenomena with a mathematical equation to solve a problem.

Schools have been preparing students for these new assessments through instruction in curriculum aligned to the CCSS and in the use of technology to acquire and

respond to tasks that are similar to those on the test. More information about Smarter Balanced Assessment may be found at www.smarterbalanced.org. Parents or students may access a practice SBAC online test at <http://sbac.portal.airast.org/practice-test/>. If you have additional questions, please contact your child's teacher.



Left to right: Thank you to all who mentored during National Mentoring Month. During "Hip-Hop" Week at Charter Oak, students immersed themselves in a study of the hip-hop culture in art, music and PE. Technology Education teacher Rachel Kane will take Sedgwick Middle School's Robotics Team to its first-ever robotics competition on February 27.



Please Welcome Our New Board Members

Tammy Exum has been active in the West Hartford schools for many years, as a coordinator of the Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI), former board member of Unified Theater, former president and executive board member of the Special Education PTA, and a representative on both the superintendent and principal search committees. Tammy and her husband, Earl, moved to West Hartford in 1999 and have three sons, grades 11, 10, and 2, in the West Hartford public school system. She earned her bachelor's degree in early childhood education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and became a schoolteacher. After earning her master's degree from Clark-Atlanta University, she pursued a career in human resources at United Technologies Corp.



Jillian Gilcrest

A social justice advocate whose works has addressed reproductive health, family economic security, sexual violence, and early care and education, Jillian is the director of Public Policy and Communication at Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services. She also serves as co-chair of West Hartford's Great by 8, a community partnership that works to ensure children are eager and ready to learn and succeed in school and in life. She has a bachelor's degree in women's studies from the University of Connecticut and a master's in social work from UConn. Jillian lives in West Hartford with her husband, Evan, and two children, the eldest of whom will start kindergarten in the West Hartford public school system in the fall.

Keeping Up With— and Ahead of - Technology Demands

As information technology continues to change and evolve, the West Hartford Information Technology Department does the same. Since the beginning of the 2013-14 school year, the Department has implemented several new systems, responded to about 4,000 Helpdesk tickets, and has continued to install just under 3,000 new computers districtwide.

The Department instituted a managed printer program, estimated to save the district up to 25 percent on toner. It is also using TalentED and BriteLocker for paperless evaluations and is upgrading the aging district servers to improve reliability and increase storage space by a factor of four.

Coming up:

- Performance PLUS, a new online curriculum and assessment management system
- Expansion of PowerTeacher at the elementary schools to include online report cards
- A new Voice over IP (VoIP) phone system for the schools
- A new district website using responsive web design!

The district's new technology committee has also been formed and meets monthly. The committee is a representative group of stakeholders from throughout the district that reviews current technology best practice and makes recommendations to further enhance West Hartford's commitment to technology.



Congratulations to Conard Math Teacher Jackie Corricelli!

Being named the Connecticut State Finalist for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching hasn't slowed the irrepressibly enthusiastic Conard math teacher Jackie Corricelli. In December, Conard students benefited from Corricelli's determination to make math fun. Based on a winning plan submitted by Corricelli to the website code.org, Conard qualified for a project titled Hour of Code, in which all Conard students were given the opportunity to learn the basics of computer language using the popular Angry Birds computer game. As part of the winning application, Conard also was given a \$10,000 grant for computer science-related materials.



Committed and innovative, Corricelli is always thinking about how to best teach and engage students. As a finalist for the Presidential award, Corricelli is one of an esteemed group of teachers who are being recognized nationally for developing and implementing a high-quality instructional program that enhances student learning. The national winner receives a \$10,000 award and a trip for two to Washington, D.C., to be personally congratulated by President Obama.



"I have tremendous admiration for her commitment, facility with the art and craft of teaching, high expectations, rapport with constituents, communication skills, resourcefulness, integrity, entrepreneurial talents, and depth of content knowledge," said Superintendent Karen List. "This recognition is well-deserved."

