



WEEKLY WARRIOR

Webutuck Central Schools
194 Haight Road, P.O. Box 405
Amenia, New York 12501

November 12, 2010

Superintendent's Notes

What Makes Some Middle-Grade Schools More Effective?

Trish Williams, Michael Kirst and Edward Haertel of Stanford University, in their article, “*Gaining Ground in the Middle Grades: Why Some Schools Do Better,*” analyzed schools covering the middle grades and found that specific factors impact on student achievement. These fell into three distinct groupings as follows.

Highly predictive:

- An intense, school-wide focus on improving academic outcomes.
- Overall organizational support for improving student outcomes, everyone evaluated on improvements.
- An orientation toward developing curriculum and instruction that will prepare students for a rigorous high-school curriculum, not just for each year’s state tests.
- Teachers working collectively and individually on a shared mission to improve student outcomes
- Measurable goals for improving district benchmark scores.
- Principals regularly communicating to faculty the importance of high expectations for all students.
- Instructional time in the classroom is protected from unnecessary interruptions.
- The school regularly communicates to students the importance of achievement to their future
- The school has requirements or contracts for parent participation.

Moderately predictive:

- Coherent instruction and curricula are aligned with the state’s K-12 academic standards
- There is extensive use of student assessment data to evaluate and improve instruction
- A sense of urgency drives educators to quickly identify and intervene with students who are behind
- Evaluation and support helps teachers continuously improve in a strong, cohesive professional culture.
- Principals provide strong leadership and drive school-wide efforts to improve achievement.
- The superintendent actively promotes a culture of building capacity at all levels.

Less predictive:

- A positive, safe, engaging school environment
- School organization of time and instruction
- Attention to student transitions

As we look at our own efforts, with the goal of continuous improvement, we should evaluate the degree to which each of these key indicators is present and active in our daily activities. Where are we lacking? It is incumbent on us to work at building our individual and collective capacities, with the goal of achieving excellence for every member of our school community.

By working together, we can do remarkable things!

Have a Great Week!

Steve Schoonmaker



EDUCATIONAL FORUM

On Thursday, December 9, 2010 from 6:30 – 9:30 pm, the Webutuck Central School will be holding an educational summit. We would like to have volunteers from all of our constituent groups to assist us in strategic planning for the future of the district. The group will be divided into numerous small groups of 6 to 10 people to address the following questions:

Webutuck Central Schools.....

- Where have we been?
- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to go?

We will ask each group to fully discuss these three questions and report their ideas and concerns back to the Board and Administration as the basis for our planning and goal setting.

If you are interested, please contact Tracy Trotter, our District Clerk at 845-373-4104. Thank you!

Quote of the Week

“Though I sometimes worry that one day my GPS will go ‘bonkers’ because I’ve gotten off track, to date, my receiver hasn’t lost its cool or showed any irritation. No yelling, no blaming, no name calling, no threats, no long diatribes. When I miss a turn or get off track – it simply says, ‘Recalculating.’ If only I could handle all my problems that way!”

Mary Fowler on GPS devices as models for the workplace

Question Corner

In our effort to better serve you, our constituents, we would like to hear any questions you might have about our school, its functions or activities. Please e-mail your questions to us at doclerk@webutuckschools.org. Thank you!

HIGH SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

**Kenneth H. Sauer, Principal
Webutuck Jr./Sr. High School**

The 7th grade students held elections on Wednesday 11/10 for the Class of 2016 officers. Nomination forms were submitted last week and candidates delivered speeches during lunch on Tuesday. We offer many thanks to our current class officers- Hannah Collins, Mikayla Townsend, Kenya Blue, and Tiffany Race for a job well done.

More great news from the music department as we proudly announce the following students have been selected to perform with the DCMEA All-County band: Matthew Starzyk on clarinet, Andrew Hoke playing Alto Sax and Thomas Ford trumpet. Congratulations also to Ruo Nan Huang for being selected to perform with the DCMEA All-County Wind Ensemble on flute.

Congratulations to sophomore, Jesse Capellaro who qualified for the New York State Cross Country meet at Pawling and ran last Saturday, November 13th. Congratulations Jesse on a great season!

The Webutuck Boys Soccer team ended its bid for a state title on Tuesday, November 9th in Middletown. After winning the first Section IX title Webutuck soccer has earned in 20 years, the boys lost a hard fought battle against Haldane. The boys' team is coached by Aaron Kelly and Kevin Kleespies and is comprised of the following: Shayne Robert, Steve Hutchinson, Tyler Salmons, Andrew Giordano, Cobi Adrian, Shane Corcoran, Tommy Nethercott, Brian Cristofel, Eddie Rich, Matt Matteo, Tyler Smith, Liam Corcoran, Bryar Hawks, Joey Giblin, Andrew Shultz, Cristion Augustin, Jimmy Tanner, Phil Graben, Chris McCoy, Austin Brown, Steven Reed, Liam Nethercott, Owen Lynch, Oscar Gomez, Nick Barnes. Congratulations gentlemen on a great season!

The Guidance Office, with the help of Mr. Rocconova has had a busy few weeks. In late October more than 30 students went to visit SUNY Delhi and SUNY Cobleskill. On November 12th a group visited Yale and Quinnipiac. These two trips were made possible by a financial donation made by our friends at Silo Ridge and Millbrook Venture Group. Financial Aid night was a big success with good turnout and many questions being asked and answered. If you have any questions about the college admissions process or how to file for financial aid please do not hesitate to contact us.

Lastly, we would like to remind everyone that report card pick-up night is scheduled for Thursday November 18th. We ask that parents come up any time during that day to get your child's report card. If you would like to meet with teachers they will be available between 6:00 and 8:00 to answer any questions, discuss concerns, and provide feedback about your child's progress. In the past we have had great success with this event with over 80% of parents attending. We are looking forward to even better participation this year. Come on in and have some treats prepared by Ms. Hendricks' Foods classes, meet with teachers, and look around the school. It's always nice to see friendly, new and familiar faces and we all know how important the dialogue between school and home is in terms of helping to guarantee the success of our young people in school. Hope to see you then.

Elementary & Intermediate Schools

*Kathleen A. McEnroe, Principal
Webutuck Elementary School
Eugene Books Intermediate School*

On November 1, from 9:30 a.m. until 2:30p.m., Webutuck Elementary School had a wonderful fire prevention program for the students. Each class was able to meet the firefighters from the Millerton Fire Department, and discover the many tools, gear, and components of a real fire truck.

Chief Jason Watson and his team dressed the part, showing each class the before and after look of a firefighter. The children were able to distinguish that it was someone who was there to help them and that they were not to be feared. The classes discussed and practiced important safety techniques, such as "Stop, Drop and Roll," calling 9-1-1, crawling low to the ground under the smoke, and feeling a door with the back of our hand so as not to burn ourselves.

When the children went outside to explore the fire truck, they were able to see a variety of special tools needed to extinguish a fire. There were different hoses and valves, as well as, ladders and extra tanks of oxygen. We even got to look through a special device that helps find people using the warmth of their bodies on a screen!

When reflecting on Fire Prevention and Safety, we must begin in our own homes. The Millerton Fire Department stressed to us that each family should check their home smoke detectors on regular basis and change the batteries at least yearly. It is also helpful to determine a safe, meeting place far enough from your home in case of an emergency. We thank the Millerton Fire Department for taking the time to visit our school and teach us about fire safety. We appreciate all of their hard work they do each day in order to keep our community safe!

St Jude's Math-a-Thon

The students in grades kindergarten through sixth are participating in the St Jude's Math-a-Thon again this year. This is an education based program that benefits St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Every child who participates is provided a Math Funbook. Each Funbook level meets national standards. This is excellent practice for our students. Last year the Webutuck students raised over \$5000, bringing our total to almost \$30,000 over the past twenty years.

Amber Valyou, a current fifth grade student, wanted to encourage more students to raise money for the children of St. Jude's. Her family has graciously offered two additional incentives to support the program. The class that has the most participation will receive a pizza party and the student who raises the most money will receive a bike donated by the Valyou family. Please encourage your child to participate for this worthy cause.

Together we can make a difference!